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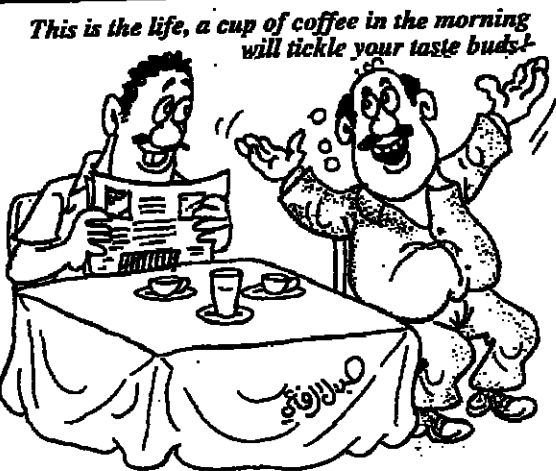
## Window on Jordan

**By Ilham Sadeq**  
*Star Staff Writer*  
SINCE TIME immemorial, Arabs have become attracted to the delicious taste of their heavy black, which has come to symbolize hospitality and honor.  
If an Arab offers you coffee, do not refuse, unless you have come to him with a demand; just take the cup and put it on the table, the host will understand that you won't drink it unless he

agrees to your request.  
In hotels, restaurants, cafes or houses, no social gathering or business meetings is ever complete without repeated offers of the Arabic black.  
Coffee has become a rooted tradition, and served in good times such as weddings and in bad times as well. Whatever the occasion, coffee has come to be seen as a binding social factor.  
"You can't imagine how I long for a sip of the lovely black," says teacher Ahmed Hamud.

When he gets up in the morning, the first thing he goes for is his hot drink. He says it carries the aromatic scent of the Orient. Some people even say that this is what they strongly miss when they are fasting during the holy month of Ramadan.  
As soon as they hear the *Athan* (prayer call) for the break of the fast, they rush to the stove with their *dulleh* (pot) to make the coffee. No water, no

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This is the life, a cup of coffee in the morning will tickle your taste buds!

# The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

Le Jourdain  
Supplément en français du Star

Presse :  
le grand ménage  
du gouvernement

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AMMAN, 25 SEPTEMBER — 1 OCTOBER 1997, VOLUME 8, NUMBER 18, 350 fils اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

## King's Jerash speech sends strong message to Islamists

**By Raed Al Abed**  
*Star Staff Writer*

OPPOSITION PARTIES, especially the Islamists, will be spending this weekend digesting and analyzing His Majesty King Hussein's improvised, but carefully worded, speech delivered before a public rally in Jerash on Tuesday.

With about 40 days remaining to polling day for the 13th Parliament, political parties, especially those who have announced their conditional decision to boycott the elections, are scurrying to redefine and review their position in light of recent Royal remarks and statements.

In his important speech in the Jerash governorate, the King called on all Jordanians to take part in the election process and in choosing their representatives. He also appeared to be offering a chance to the Islamists to reconsider their boycott decision. But he also warned the Islamists and other parties not to exploit their positions, or people's needs, for their own selfish interests.

The King defended Jordan's democracy and political pluralism and made it clear that he was not seeking confrontations with fellow Muslims, but that such confrontations occur when ideas are imported into the country.

He also defended the constitutionality of the single vote system and reiterated Jordan's commitment to a just, comprehensive and lasting peace adding that Jordan was not surrendering, but remains a strong fence in the face of conspiracies.

He referred to recent wave of terror acts, carried out by



hood and their political party, the IAF, as a spent force adding that the government has already managed to absorb the initial shock of their decision to boycott the elections.  
It is now clear that the Islamic movement, which until recently was considered the most prominent social and political force in the political arena, will be missing from the 13th Parliament. The government argues that such an absence was by the movement's own choice. One thing is for sure, their departure will cool down the temperature and diversity of debates in the Lower House.  
But in recent days, the once solid opposition front began showing signs of strain. At least six independent Islamist figures, some of whom enjoy popular support, announced that they will contest the elections.

Some opposition heads believe the boycott decision, initiated by the Muslim Brotherhood and later adopted by nine political parties, may have been a miscalculation, especially that most of the smaller parties were hoping to reach a compromise with the government that will enable them to rejoin the elections.

Recently, four opposition parties officially announced that they are running for the elections after all. They are the Jordanian Arab Socialist Ba'ath and the Jordanian Arab Progressive Party and the Arab Land Party. Also a moderate-

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FEELING THE ICECAPS: Sensors planted somewhere in the desolate deserts of Greenland's Arctic icecap transmit data to a satellite, which scientists hope will help them come to grips with Earth's frozen past in order to predict its future. For scientists trying to learn how global warming may affect the climate's course, understanding the character and chemistry of the ice and snow at the planet's extremities has taken on an unusual urgency. The information they seek could be critical to efforts to curb the burning of fossil fuels and industrial emissions. To stave off global warming, world leaders plan to meet in November to prepare the first international controls on emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide. (Los Angeles Times photo by Robert Lee Hotz.)

## Doha summit continues to polarize Arabs

**By Ilham Sadeq**  
*Star Staff Writer*

THE ONGOING talk about the coming fourth Middle East and North Africa (MENA) summit which is due on 8 November in Doha, has divided the Arab countries into camps. Some countries (including the host country, Qatar), stress the need to hold the summit on time while others (headed by Syria and Saudi Arabia) refuse to attend as long as Israel is invited. Other countries have not still taken their decision or prefer to participate but with a minor delegation.

The core difference is mainly political. This fact has become clear when the Doha summit issue was included in the agenda of the latest ministerial meeting held last week in Cairo by foreign ministries of Egypt, Syria, Qatar and Saudi Arabia and the Secretary General of the Arab League, Saad Kamal.

The participants failed to

adopt a unified stance, but according to the Egyptian foreign minister Amr Musa "the decision to participate in the conference will be left for every country separately".

According to Foreign Minister Dr Fawaz Tawamleh, Jordan will take part if invited.

Also, local business opinion about participation seems to be unenthusiastic. Some at a meeting at the Amman Chamber of Industry express their dismay, but others point out that there is still a flicker of hope. Others still were bombastic.

"We shall take part in the conference, Qatar is a friendly and brotherly country, so why boycott a summit hosted by her?" points a prominent expert Dr Fahad Al Fanek.

Referring to the reasons behind calls of some countries to boycott because of Israeli participation, Al Fanek tells *The Star* "it is illogical to boycott the Doha summit while we are meeting with Israelis in Jordan."

Since they were launched in 1994, the last three MENA Summits spoke about billions of dollars of investments that would flock to the region and start mega projects. However, none materialized.

The Casablanca, Amman and Cairo summits provided a bright picture for the future in terms of prosperity and development, however, they failed to come up with tangible results.

The proposed plan to establish the Bank for Development in the Middle East and North

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## Government suspends publication of 8 weeklies for failing to comply with press law

AMMAN (Star)—The government suspended, Wednesday, the publication of at least eight weekly newspapers under the temporary Press and Publication Law, which was passed in May. The eight newspapers were told by the Press and Publication Dept., to suspend publication for failing to comply with Articles 24 and 51 of the law.

Sources expected the final number of weeklies to be suspended for failing to comply with the law to reach 18.

Daily and weekly papers were given three months, as of mid-May, to adjust their legal and financial status or face suspension. The deadline was extended for another month during which weeklies were asked to present balance sheets and financial ledgers to be audited by the Press and Publication Dept.

Article 24 stipulates that weekly papers must have a registered capital of JD 300,000, while Article 51 gives the Council of Ministers the right to issue "necessary measures to implement the articles of the [Press and Publication] Law."

The capital requirement article stirred legal debates since almost all individually or joint liability owned weeklies were able to register themselves at the required capital at the Ministry of Trade and Industry without depositing the actual sum. The government said it understood the article to mean that the capital must be paid in full. It is likely that the final say on this issue will be left to the courts. At least four weekly papers, including *The Star*, have complied with the capital requirement as under-

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## Iraqis still hungry, bitter after 6 years of UN sanctions

**By Nicholas Goldberg**

BAGHDAD—On a recent afternoon, as three men behind the counter of a narrow shop began pouring shares of flour and rice into bags and weighing portions of vegetable oil on a scale, a line quickly began to form outside.

The temperature was well over 100 degrees, and Faveyla Hamad was hot in her black veil and abaya. But she waited patiently for more than half an hour because she needed her allotment as soon as possible: the 150 grams of salt, 9 kilograms of flour, 1 kilogram of cooking oil, and the tea, beans, rice and sugar that she will live on during the month ahead.

Like most Iraqis, Hamad subsists almost exclusively on her monthly food ration. Because of the UN economic sanctions on Iraq, she says, she can't really afford much else. She hasn't eaten meat since Ramadan, seven months ago. Every so often she buys an egg, and she and her three sons share it. When the food ration arrives—courtesy of the UN "food-for-oil" plan—she's grateful, but she's bitter, too.

"It's not enough," she says. "Sugar, rice, beans—OK, but what about meat, chicken and eggs? How are we supposed to survive?...Why are they doing this to us?"

Hamad's plaintive questions are echoed throughout Baghdad, and throughout Iraq. Six years after the United Nations imposed strict economic sanctions on Iraq, and two years after it approved the food-for-oil deal to lessen the impact of those sanctions on the most vulnerable segments of the population, most Iraqis remain hungry, poor and perplexed.

The sanctions, the toughest imposed on any country in modern history, include a near-total embargo on the sale of Iraqi oil, the country's chief export. They ban all other imports and exports as well, with certain clearly defined humanitarian exceptions.

Designed to weaken President Saddam Hussein and to rein in his regional ambitions—and, at

least in the eyes of American officials, to drive him from power—the sanctions remain a cornerstone of international policy in the Middle East since the Gulf War.

Yet after six years, it is not clear whether they are working. Certainly Hussein and his intimates are not suffering: His son Qday controls much of the lucrative smuggling business, diplomats say, and opulent palaces continue to be built for Hussein's cronies, relatives and top military aides. The man's ambitious chemical, nuclear and biological weapons programs and his struggle for regional power have been constrained to some degree—a crucial goal of the sanctions—but there's little indication that his regime is unstable, or that it is growing less brutal, or that he is likely to be toppled in the near future.

What is clear is that, for ordinary Iraqis, the country is collapsing. Where once it was an oil-rich nation that was putting into place a sophisticated health system, providing clean drinking water and successfully fighting off malnutrition, such accomplishments are today a mere memory.

Since the sanctions were imposed, there's been no money to import goods, food has grown prohibitively expensive, jobs have disappeared and inflation has soared to grotesque levels. Ragged street children are now ubiquitous, beggars are everywhere in Baghdad, and crime and prostitution have come out of the shadows.

According to Phillip Heflin, director of the UNICEF office here, some 4,500 children under 5 years old now die each month from malnutrition or related diarrheal and respiratory diseases—up from 900 before the Gulf War. Illiteracy has climbed from 27.4 percent to 40 percent since 1990.

Perhaps worst hit has been the middle class. Doctors and lawyers have given up their work to hawk cigarettes on the street or drive taxicabs in order

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## Interbet: Where Internet betting is a dicey deal

**By Mark Fineman**

ST. JOHN'S, Antigua and Barbuda—None of the 64,000 residents of this small, three-island Caribbean nation have complained about the latest international gambling boom to sweep their secretive little piece of paradise.

In the past few months alone, more than a dozen casinos have opened here. But most Antiguanans don't even know they exist. That's because you can't

see them. Packed with games of roulette, blackjack, poker and craps, each gambling house is small enough to fit into the corner of a tiny room. Yet their owners say they're taking in millions of dollars a month from thousands of bettors, from Los Angeles to New York and beyond.

There are no taxes on capital gains or income in Antigua and Barbuda. The government shuns outside scrutiny, even from its own citizens. During the past decade, it has licensed at least 37 offshore banks and at least two major sports-betting operations, and only it knows the names and assets of their owners.

Under legislation passed earlier this year, Antigua has been charging just \$100,000 a year for an Internet casino license that offers a similar promise of minimum regulation, maximum anonymity and tax-free profit. But all that soon may change.

The Internet boom comes amid a series of recent corruption and fraud scandals here, the biggest involving the world's first Internet bank collapse. From a base in Antigua and with the promise of "utmost privacy," two Russians allegedly used the Web to bilk wealthy customers in the United States and elsewhere out of tens of millions of dol-

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"Cleaning Up The World"

# Another chance for an environmental-friendly approach

By Kerry O'Neill  
Special to The Star

WHEN DID you last pick up rubbish from the ground? You probably walk past piles of garbage every single day, without blinking an eye. We're all guilty of forgetting the little things which are creating major environmental headaches for local councils, governments and countries globally.

The "Clean Up The World" campaign is organized here through the Jordan Environmental Society (JES). It offers you the opportunity to work alongside millions of people worldwide, to brighten the larger environmental picture by identifying and finding solutions to problems of local concern. "The environment doesn't recognize color or ethnicity," says Mahmoud Al Omari of JES.

Over 40 million people from 110 countries from Australia to Zimbabwe helped clean up their local areas and popular sites last year, and we're expecting at least 30,000 volunteers to help "Clean Up Jordan" this September.

Between 25-26 September, groups from 22 branches nationwide will implement the community campaigns they've planned, managed and promoted themselves. School groups, families and many other

volunteers from cities to small Bedouin camps will be synchronizing their efforts, to collect tons of solid waste (plastic goods, bottles, cans, paper) from areas in Jerash, Debbin National Park, and a 10 kilometer strip near the Dead Sea, to name but a few.

"Where possible, this waste will be recycled," said Mr Al Omari, "as recycling is a relatively new concept here, and its promotion is one of our prime concerns." People need to feel and appreciate nature in order to "positively change behavioral patterns towards the environment," says Elizabeth Dowdeswell, director of the United Nations Environment Program which supports the campaign.

JES also runs camps, trips, seminars and lectures on "eco-tourism," after which participants often become JES members, arranging activities and disseminating environmental information amongst their peers.

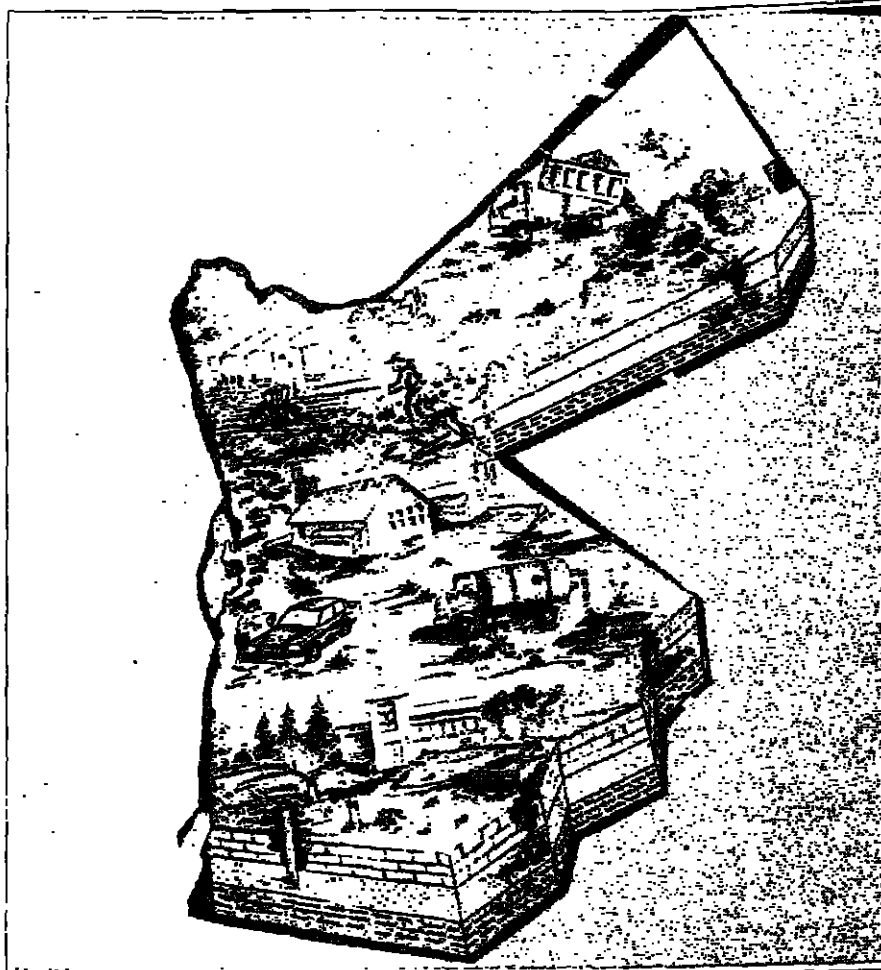
This voluntary work is invaluable, for as Al Omari says, "JES is one of only two non-governmental organizations working with communities at grass-roots level, to heighten environmental awareness. We will give lectures to large audiences, or to a group of 10 Bedu." "Discovery Eco-Tourism," a company which promotes

responsible rather than mass tourism and works on awareness-raising campaigns with the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature, is also enthusiastic about getting involved in such a worthwhile campaign.

This kind of work is finally being rewarded, and is attracting more investment both from within and outside Jordan. Funding has been secured from the World Wildlife Fund to develop a site south of Amman, with the intention to build a regional Environmental Training Center.

But the government needs to reassess its priorities, putting more emphasis on so-called "Green" issues. "Pollution prevention pays," says Al Omari. Politics, economics and unemployment tend to overshadow environmental concerns, and with the forthcoming elections receiving almost blanket coverage in the press, the environment has once again been forced into the background. But with due fear of sounding melodramatic, who'll care about a sound economy or zero percent unemployment when the remaining water isn't safe to drink and nothing will grow on the barren, polluted earth?

Stability in the economy and the environment are intrinsically linked, and equal concern must be allotted to each.



A sign in the JES office says "Polluter Pays? NO—Pollution Prevention Pays." The Arab Potash Company is one of the main, generous sponsors of Jordan's "Clean Up The World" efforts. Wouldn't it be preferable, however, to minimize waste production in the first place? To improve waste disposal/recycling methods and to

promote public awareness sufficiently, rendering such campaigns unnecessary? For more information about the work of the Jordan Environmental Society or to get involved in the positive, results-oriented "Clean up the World" campaign in your area, contact "JES" on 06 699844, or E-mail: JES@go.com.jo.

## The delicious taste of 'black', lures Jordanians from all walks of life

Continued from page 1

food, it is just straight gulps of that black.

Mr Hamad's sense of smell is very strong. Letting his nose guide him to the coffee, he wanders in downtown Amman, he would stop. Taking sips of Arabic *Saada* does ease the mind from a hard day's work at school.

And he is not the only one. Many stop their cars, buses or trucks along the road just to have swigs of that black.

Coffee for Jordanians is much more than a drink. For Bedouins, it has a certain value, especially when mixed with cardamom. It actually has a peculiar taste and flavor.

According to customs, if you are offered this drink and don't want a refill, you just

shake the small cup. If you refuse to drink it will be considered an insult.

Just as favored by men, women have lately been turning to this habit. They may for instance drink cups and cups while gossiping, or because of pressure.

A friend who used to blame her colleagues for drinking too much coffee in the university, recently admitted that she has become a coffee fan. "You won't believe it, I have become addicted because of my kids," said Mrs Najwa Al Ali who is a mother of four.

When Najwa feels upset she immediately goes for the black. In earlier days she used to say "I wonder how you like its taste [coffee], it's awful."

But it is the social aspect that is important. At a recent



Are you being served?

gathering of three friends in my house, the women just kept drinking the stuff. One of the ladies, Widad drank five cups in two hours, this is of course with cigarettes.

Reacting to the charge that she was becoming addicted, she just smiled saying "I can't resist the charming taste and flavor. It thrills the nostrils as much as the tongue," she said. While fully understanding its potentially harmful effects, she continued to pour.

Going over the newspaper, I read the headline, "Coffee drinkers, beware, caffeine can cause cancer and/or distorts the fetus in the womb." But Imman just laughed saying "newspaper chatter, this is nonsense, I read in another newspaper that coffee prevents cancer, not only does it revive you but keeps the mind ticking, so whom are we to believe?" she exclaims.

Many coffee drinkers do realize the harmful effects of too much of this lovely black, but their love-affair with it blinds their eyes.

This is definitely not a call

for boycotting coffee, but it is rather a call for drinking it in moderation.

## Doha summit remains the core of Arab dispute

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Africa is still a dream, for instance.

But Dr Al Fanek argues otherwise "though such benefits were not that great, there was no harm." On the contrary, he says "it is in Jordan's best interest for businessmen and investors to meet face to face."

Sharing Al Fanek's views is Dr Mohammad Al Halaqa, secretary general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. "We can't isolate ourselves from such venues, and have to give a bright picture about the investment and business climate in Jordan through these economic forums," he adds.

However, Dr Halaqa says that the participation of the Jordanian private sector will be below our hopes, as focus will be on big projects during the summit rather than on small or medium sized ventures.

Also, there is the psychological factor. "The private sector is reluctant to participate because of the attendance of Israel," he continues.

What is hindering the private sector from being optimistic about the conference is that it has not reaped tangible fruits



Abu Hassan

from previous summits.

The economic summit conferences have enabled Israel to penetrate our markets, some analysts argue, while our projects have been marginalized. "Summits were a psychological test for Arabs in order to accept Israel as an economic partner in the region," says prominent analyst Mr. Ahmed Al Nammari.

Though some Arab countries rushed to establish economic ties with Israel after the signing of the peace treaties, later they

realized that economic normalization can't go ahead unless Israel binds itself to the peace commitments to achieve stability in the region.

This fact is stressed by Mr Khalidoun Abu Hassan, president of the Amman Chamber of Industry, who says that Israel was the only beneficiary from the previous economic summits. But, he adds that as a private sector we meet with Arab economic sectors under the umbrella of the Federation of the Chambers of Trade and Industry and the Conference for Arab Investors. This is aimed at enhancing economic cooperation and encourage joint investments.

Though it is still premature for a final decision on participation, it seems that some Arab countries make their participation conditional on progress in the peace process.

However, they are also keen to conclude a balanced resolution that serves Arab interests without causing damage to their relations with any Arab country.

## Where Internet betting is a dicey deal

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lars before closing the bank and fleeing last month. The virtual casino boom also comes at a time when off-island critics, among them US law enforcement agencies and the State Department, say Antigua's loose regulatory track record and its secrecy laws have amounted to a recipe for disaster. Together, they offer organized crime rings and international drug cartels a haven as "wash" billions in illicit profits through Antiguan offshore businesses.

To play on an Internet casino, gamblers access a casino site on the World Wide Web through their personal computers, establish an account with a credit card or money order and collect their virtual "chips." The computer program ushers them into a full-color, multi-dimensional casino that looks remarkably similar to those in Las Vegas, and they can gamble at the table of their choice. Given that it is an industry where only the customers' credit cards and money orders are at risk against software and human thieves, the Web casino entrepreneur acknowledged that Antigua's latest cybercraze is ripe for fraud.

But he said his casino uses the latest technology from two Canadian computer scientists, along with the older technology of random number generator chips, to ensure the fairest game around. Developed by the directors of Toronto-based Cryptologic, which is publicly traded in Canada, Scott's casino software uses banking and encryption technology to, as he puts it, "convert real money into virtual cash quickly and safely. And all winners, he said, are paid off in a day."

Although Scott said he welcomed the "big package" of new regulations that the Antiguan government recently sent him as key to protecting the image of the new industry, he added, "I don't think anybody has the knowledge of how to regulate this technology."

US officials say regulating gambling technology is especially tricky in Antigua, where the cash-strapped government has few resources and, critics say, little resolve to become more open. "This island is operated like a lodge. It's like a secret society," said Winston Derrick, who publishes Antigua's only independent newspaper, "You have to fight and fight for information."

In the aftermath of the Internet bank collapse, though, the official Antigua & Barbuda Government Internet Web page—an elaborate electronic magnet designed to attract all kinds of international businesses—has posted the new offshore rules and regulations for closer inspection. But a look at the rise and fall of the European Union Bank, which billed itself as the world's first, full-service Internet bank, helps explain why US officials are viewing Antigua's latest cyberboom with concern.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

The Star  
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## King sends stern message

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leftist party, the Jordanian Democratic Unionist Party, is contesting the elections.

Al Mustaqbal Party, which has shifted from the center to a more leftist pan-Arabist stands, joined the boycott list, followed by the new-born pan-Arabist party, the Popular Democratic Nationalist Movement Party.

"I believe that there is a crisis in the Islamic movement and in the government," said Dr Bassam Al Umoush, a moderate Islamist who resigned from the executive council of the IAF in protest of the boycott decision. "The government is putting a brave face when in fact it has a cri-

sis. But in fact there is a big loss for the government, which cannot say that Jordan is a model of pluralism in the absence of meaningful opposition [in the Lower House]," he added.

In a recent development, Ya'qoub Zayadeen, head of the Jordanian Communist Party, said that he was promised an audience with His Majesty the King. He told *The Star* that "he has no specific initiative," but "I will talk with His Majesty about the country's crisis including the elections and also the concerns of the opposition parties." He is optimistic that the King will interfere to resolve the crisis.

Ten political parties, in



addition to professional associations and a number of independent figures declared "that their decision to boycott the November elections was irreversible. They blamed the government for failing to initiate a promised dialogue."

"We are boycotting to defend the popular will, and for the sake of a healthy parliamentary life," the boycott camp said in a statement released earlier this week. The statement also pointed out to the main goal behind the boycott which is "to protect the interests of the country and its people."

For the first time, the opposition statement included the Muslim Brotherhood and its political arm, the Islamic Action Front (IAF), as signatories.

This means a full involvement of the Brotherhood in politics, something that does not please many in the movement itself. "If the Brotherhood wanted to practice politics I do not see the need for the party [IAF]," said Dr

Ishaq Al Farhan, the general secretary of the IAF and a member of the Shura Council of the Muslim Brotherhood. Al Farhan stressed that the Islamists are ready to participate in the elections if the one-man, one-vote electoral system was amended to a one-man, two-vote system.

"The Government could put an end to the crisis by releasing a temporary amended electoral law that guarantees two votes for each citizen," he said.

However, some opposition leaders believe they have missed the boat. "Since it's only one month that separates us from the general elections it is already too late for such initiatives," said Mr Salem Al Nahas the secretary general of the leftist Jordanian People's Democratic Party. "The election law is only one element in our list of demands. The issue is that Jordan is facing a political and economic crisis—this is the core of the problem."

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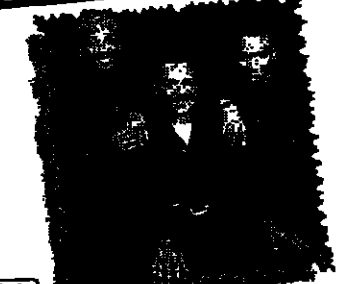
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شاملاً العشاء

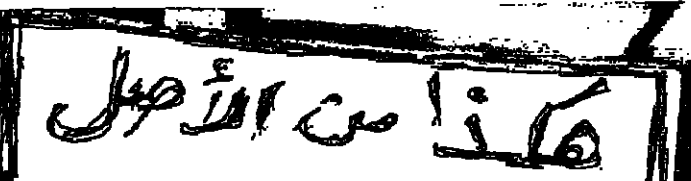


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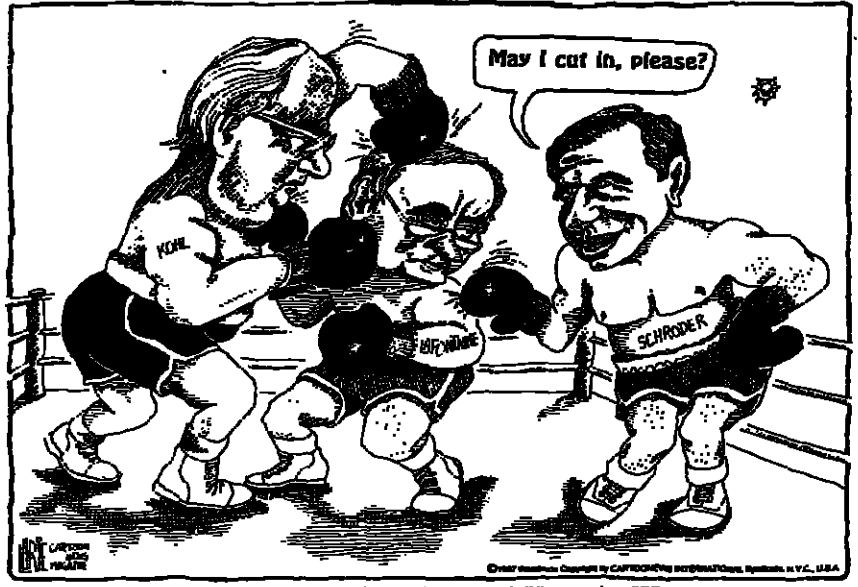








Lurie's NewsCartoon



(News: German Chancellor Kohl will have an up hill national election battle if the opposition SPD party, now led by LaFontaine, throws its support behind the very popular Governor of Lower Saxony Gerhard Schröder.)

## Our Say...

### Avoiding the catastrophe

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein warned this week of an impending catastrophe for the region if Israeli and Arab extremists were to succeed in forcing their agenda and burying the peace process. The King's warning was stern and blunt. A further wave of terror acts from both sides could easily wash away the achievements of the past few years, driving the region to the brink of war and threatening the reoccupation of the West Bank and Gaza.

Such a gloomy prospect is not far-fetched. The Middle East peace process has received lethal blows ever since an Israeli fanatic gunned down in cold blood Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. From thereon, a series of bloody attacks and stark violations of agreements succeeded in driving a wedge into the peace camp and in creating an atmosphere of uncertainty and pessimism. Today the region finds itself no closer to peace than it was six or 10 or even 20 years ago.

The King reminded us all of the dire consequences of an uncontrolled slide towards violence and military confrontations. The lessons of the past must be understood soberly and clearly. No one can afford another catastrophic upset similar to the 1948 and 1967 debacles, whose political, human and material outgrowths are evident until today.

Jordan in particular cannot take in another human exodus if, God forbid, Israel commits the unthinkable and drives away hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homes across the River Jordan.

This region has committed itself to a just, comprehensive and lasting peace. This is a peace that should become our legacy to our sons and daughters and their children afterwards. Extremists on both sides must not be allowed to run away with this investment and drive the region towards a black hole of violence and bloodshed.

This message must reach everybody, most notably in the Israeli leadership, some of whom share the King's concerns and fears. The message must also reach those who can bring pressure to bear on both parties; namely the United States.

In recent months we have seen a worrying rise in the power of Israeli extremists and fanatics. They, we are told do not represent the Israeli majority, who cherish and want peace. But Israeli extremism, beginning with the shooting of Prime Minister Rabin and not precluding the official policies of the current Israeli government such as land expropriation and settlement building, has given Arab extremists the firepower they need to radicalize the region.

It is evident that the recent rise in Arab extremism correlates with the unleashing of right-wing policies by the Israeli government. These policies have derailed the peace process and left the region and its people with the feeling that they were cheated of the right to hope for peace. The United States has a responsibility, a direct one, which it cannot escape. The King's warning of an impending catastrophe must be taken seriously. ■



● An Israeli soldier pushes a Palestinian youth away as he takes down an Israeli flag from the roof of a building in Ras Al Amud in East Jerusalem while a young woman tries to replace it with a Palestinian flag. Israeli settlers occupied the house in the Arab neighborhood claiming ownership of the property, but the Arab owner has filed a complaint of illegal entry saying he has not sold his house to the settlers.

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Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

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### Letter from the Levant

# Havel's message: Intellectual opposition and moral resistance

By Osama El-Sherif

THE VISIT by Czech President Vaclav Havel to the Middle East this week has given Arab journalists and politicians a chance to know more about a man who is no ordinary leader. His life-long struggle as an intellectual against the tyranny of communism has not doubt contributed to its eventual downfall not only in the former Czechoslovakia but in the rest of Eastern Europe as well.

Not many Arabs know of Havel's literary works and perhaps only few know of his international standing as a man of letters, a recognized playwright, a political activist, a prisoner of conscience, and a great humanist with a vision of tolerance towards various cultures and civilizations—a vision based on unity through diversity. This vision is indeed rare in today's unipolar world of materialistic global culture and values.

This is a vision that we as Arabs, whose culture is being targeted by the encroachment of this global technological culture and the new world order, should share and value.

Havel's trip has taken him to Lebanon, Jordan, the Palestinian areas and Israel. And although he tried to put his good offices, as a recognized literary figure and a prominent European politician, in the service of the ailing Middle East peace process, it is doubtful that the current Israeli leadership will appreciate his views on human rights and Palestinian right to self-determination.

But still, may be our Arab intellectuals could learn a few things from the Czech leader: especially about the role of thinkers in political reform through what Havel himself called as the strength of moral resistance.

Havel's struggle in the now defunct Czechoslovakia has put him in the forefront of intellectual opposition in his country since the early sixties. His literary contributions, through a number of critical plays, became a major factor in the process leading to the birth of the so-called Prague Spring, which ended abruptly when Soviet tanks rolled into Czechoslovakia in 1968.

When many of his countrymen, especially intellectuals, fled to the West, Havel remained in Prague working in odd jobs, but still struggling to defend his ideas and beliefs on democracy and defying a ban on his works.

During this period, his outspokenness gained him international repute. In 1975, he sent an open letter to the President of Czechoslovakia in which he pointed to the

oppression that was threatening society. His activities landed him in prison three times and he spent over five years in jail and at one time he felt so ill that his life was in danger.

One of his most important works, an essay entitled *The Power of the Powerless* was published in 1978 in which he analyzed "the essence of Communist totalitarian oppression and described the means and mechanisms used by the Communist regime in its effort to create a powerless, resigned society consisting of timid and morally corrupt individuals." But his response to this threat was demonstrated in the strength of moral resistance—of life in truth.

By the end of 1980's Havel was a central figure in intellectual and political opposition in his country and in 1989 he was one of the founders of the Civic Forum, a platform uniting all civic and political opposition movement, leading to what became known as the "Velvet Revolution." That process culminated in the downfall of communist rule and in his election as president of Czechoslovakia.

Havel brought a sense of intellectual duty, even spirituality, to the office of the presidency, accelerating political and economic reforms and building democratic institutions. He was re-elected twice and even as president he continued to publish his works.

He won many international awards including the Erasmus Prize, the Olof Palme Prize and the UNESCO Prize for the Teaching of Human Rights. He was also awarded honorary doctorates from international universities.

When he was awarded an honorary degree in literature from the University of Jordan last week, his first from an Arab university, Havel said at the ceremony that when he thinks of the roots of all world religions he reaches the conclusion that they all share the same foundation of praising one God and calling for people to deal with each other with respect, tolerance and love.

He said he was pained that there are those who attack Islam because of acts carried by some extremist groups. To the surprise of those attending, President Havel recited three sayings of Prophet Mohammed that underline tolerance and openness between nations and peoples.

As a humanist Vaclav Havel was willing to learn from what our civilization, religion and culture have to offer to the concept



Havel receives his honorary doctorate from the University of Jordan

of a global civilization strengthened through diversity of cultures. We too, as Arabs, must open our minds and learn. We too should believe in the tremendous strength of moral resistance, in the power of truth, especially in our struggle against Zionism and what it stands for.

I surfed the Internet looking for entries on President Havel. I found over 7500 sites on the man, his works and speeches. One speech in particular caught my attention. It was delivered by Vaclav Havel at Harvard Commencement Day on 8 June 1995. Entitled "Global Civilization: A thin veneer..." Havel says:

"Many of the great problems we face today have their origin in the fact that this global civilization, though in evidence everywhere, is not more than a thin veneer over the sum total of human awareness. It is a challenge to this [global] civilization to start understanding itself as a multicultural and multipolar civilization, whose meaning lies not in undermining the individuality of different spheres of culture and civilization but in allowing them to be more completely themselves. This will only be possible, even conceivable, if we all accept a basic code of mutual co-existence, a kind of continuum we can all share, one that will enable us to go on living side by side."

# Having failed, Arafat and Netanyahu must go

By Maher Hathout

THE PATIENT is almost dead. The patient in this scenario is the Middle East peace process—or hope for it. All the resuscitation efforts—shuttling back and forth by US envoy Dennis Ross, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's visit or the incomprehensible summit of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, PLO leader Yasser Arafat and His Majesty King Hussein in Cairo—have failed.

Like the lonely feeling of a hospital waiting room, anxiety fills the air of this troubled region. No one is brave enough to announce to the family that the brain shows no activity and the heart has stopped beating. The peace process is dead.

Brain failure is clear in the absence of any waves of bright initiatives or creative solutions. Heart failure is clear in the absence of any pulse of justice or peace. The two doctors handling this case are not qualified, namely Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Arafat.

Both of them, regardless of their intentions or passions, are proven failures. Arafat could never spell out to his people clear goals about their long-awaited independent state or form a strategy to serve these goals; he promised things he knew he could never deliver—in particular, controlling the Palestinian elements who oppose his projects.

The only clear-cut statement the Palestinians heard was about Jerusalem being the eternal, indivisible capital of Israel. Arafat failed to offer his people any inspiration. He keeps oscillating in a love-hate, tough-soft relationship with his opposition.

The Palestinians who are abused in and out of the Occupied Territories each day (when they are open) are bewildered by the autocracy, corruption and false grandeur of the Palestinian National Authority. Arafat is unable to lead or offer solutions at this

critical time. He is losing the support of the street, the acquiescence of the Palestinian opposition and the trust of the Israeli government. In Netanyahu's case, the failure is even clearer.

Since he became prime minister, it has been one disaster after another. He stuck a dagger in the heart of the Oslo, Norway, agreement by abdicating its principles. He angered Muslims and Christians by expanding settlements in East Jerusalem. He agitated one-fifth of the inhabitants of the globe, the Muslims, by blasting the notorious tunnel exit next to the walls of the Al Aqsa Mosque and by insisting on the occupation of South Lebanon. Each one of these steps came with its heavy price of lost lives and bloodshed.

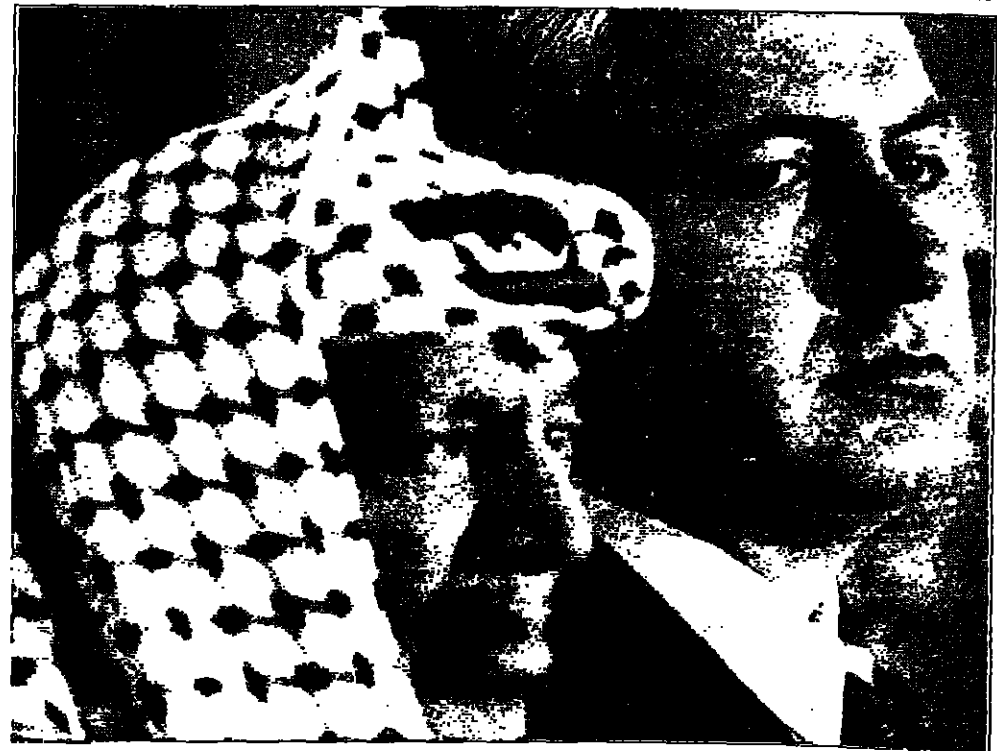
Recently, Lebanese television illustrated the absurdity of the Middle East: Hezbollah and the Israelis are reportedly negotiating to exchange body parts of Israeli commandos killed during their incursion into Lebanon for Lebanese prisoners in Israeli jails. In the same broadcast, Netanyahu stated that he will not withdraw his occupying troops from south Lebanon because he does not want the Lebanese to invade Israel. He wants to convince everyone that the Israeli army is in Lebanon not as a card to be used in any future negotiations with Syria or as a spearhead for expansion or as a muscle to control sources of water from the Litani River, but to protect the security of Israel.

Now, while we are in the midst of one of those breaks between episodes of violence, is an appropriate time to fire the doctors and hire new ones. There is nothing that Arafat and Netanyahu can offer to alleviate this crisis. They should excuse themselves or be excused. There is no doubt that a new Palestinian team with more

credibility and ability can be democratically elected by the Palestinians in the territories and in the diaspora. There are leaders like Haidar Abdel Shafi or Hanan Mikhail-Ashrawi and others of the same caliber who can fill the void. They have proved themselves in their conviction and passion for a peaceful solution.

There also is no doubt that an Israel without Netanyahu will have greater potential for acceptance in the quest for peace. Is this achievable? Yes, I believe that if the US government says that we will only talk to a new team, and we promise honest brokerage, then things will change. ■

Hathout is senior adviser to the Muslim Public Affairs Council, a public service agency based in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles. LA Times-Washington Post News Service



Arafat, Netanyahu: distant foes

## Middle East Beat

by Kharrat English

### Status final!

THE QUESTION of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations has fluctuated continuously between the definition of status to final status, and now it seems has reached the point of status final.

Oslo is implemented. Oslo is not being implemented, and screams are filling our publications with the verbal diarrhea of local, regional, and international politicians. Everywhere, the call is for pressuring the PNA, or the Israeli government, or even Jordan, and sometimes all of us together, to comply with a forced situation that remains nebulous, both in form and in content.

Israeli cabinets come and go, and despite their ideological differences, the main concern remains the same: Security for the state of Israel. This notion implies above all else, mutual trust and working for common goals, and cannot be squeezed into a straight jacket of single items, and bartering points based on an exchange mechanism of tit-for-tat.

It seems that the only concessions taking place on the Palestinian-Israeli tracks are the ones offered by Mr. Netanyahu to the supporters of the religious groups comprising his cabinet, and those much publicized in the Arab and international press, about the meeting of Mr. Arafat with the Palestinian opposition.

It is true that there are concessions being made in this scenario, but they are certainly not among the Palestinian and Israeli negotiators. Each so-called partner in peace, is far more concerned with his own side, than actually dealing with the other. Bombs explode, and settlements go up; terrorism is the scourge of our time, and occupied territories breed more violence, so is there really any room for rationality in this affair?

No one, among our brethren in Arabism and Islam, has suffered from the policies of intransigence and extremism, than Jordan. It is our fate and organic links to our Palestinian brothers that have made us their main pillar of support in their predicament. His Majesty King Hussein, has carried the Palestinian cause in his heart and deeds for almost half a century, and His Royal Highness, the Crown Prince's earliest work has been on the Palestinian issue, and Palestinian self-determination.

The unity of heart and purpose, of our Hashemite collective leadership has carried the Jordanian message regarding the Palestinian tragedy to the whole world. The King's linkage of fighting terrorism to the political process of Palestinian rights, has been directly complemented by the Crown Prince's call, for considering the human aspect of peace building, in the age of the politics and economics of despair.

This complementarity in Hashemite efforts and achievements could not have been possible without a strong and vibrant Jordan, active regionally and internationally. A strong Jordan is a strong pillar of support to our Palestinian brothers, and a moderate Jordan means stability to the whole region. From this perspective, it is our duty as Jordanians to look for our own interests, and seek advantages to our own country to fulfill our duties to ourselves, and carry out the responsibilities we are fated to assume.

There is no point in seeking peace for the others if we do not have it for ourselves, and we cannot advance the cause of development unless we want it to our country and people. We are committed to Arab and Islamic solidarity, but solidarity is reciprocity, and does not depend on trickle-down from bottlenecks. We are hopeful that Arab and Islamic solidarity will not remain a vague notion, built on the minimum of cooperation as it appears now, but rather a serious system of collective support and understanding.

Whether final status negotiations for our Palestinian brethren, or status final for the road, Jordan remains at the heart of the region. ■

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## Business scene

The Natural Resources Authority is negotiating with foreign companies to study the crude oil potentials in the country. Talks are being held with Algerian and Czech companies to conclude a joint oil agreement by the end of this year. The American-based Anadarko has started drilling in Al Safawi in northeast Jordan, after an agreement signed earlier with the Authority. The lab tests results are seen by the Authority as highly promising. The American Trans-Global oil company is currently conducting excavations in the Dead Sea.

A merger is expected between the Philadelphia Bank and the Jordan Financial Investments Co. According to recommendations by the Central Bank, all local banks are required to readjust their financial status and increase their capital to JD 20 million by the end of this year. So, this merger could be away to create bigger financial and banking institutions and boost the performance of the banking and investment sectors. The Philadelphia Bank was established in 1993 at a capital of JD 10 million, whereas the Jordan Financial Investment began in 1994 at a capital of JD 7.5 million.

Profits made by the Arab-German Insurance Co., was JD 177,000 in the first half of this year. Total premium till the end of 1996 were JD 1,780,000 compared with JD 2,800,000 in the first half of this year. The company's assets till last June were JD 4.2 million, compared with JD 3.2 million by the end of last year, a rise of about JD 1 million. Its authorized and subscribed capital is JD 5 million (half of which is paid).

The Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Trade is organizing a week's training course for the directors of Palestinian trade chambers beginning 27 September. It will enable participants to see examples of their Jordanian counterparts and make them aware of the available technical expertise in this country. On another aspect and to reinforce the Palestinian-Jordanian trade exchange, the Bureau for Jordanian Commercial Coordination has last week, launched its

### Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 24 September

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US \$	0.7080	0.7100
£	1.1510	1.1568
DM	0.4124	0.4145
SFr	0.4801	0.4825
FRF	0.1227	0.1233
YEN (100)	0.5624	0.5652
DEL	0.3667	0.3685
LIT (100)	0.0419	0.0421

# Partnership agreement under the spotlight from businessmen

By Iham Sadeq  
Star Staff Writer

AS THE countdown to the final signing of the Jordanian-Euro-partnership agreement approaches, the private sector is becoming more concerned about its implications to Jordan.

A conference was recently held at the Amman Chamber of

Industry to discuss openly the economic opportunities related to such a pact. It was attended by government officials, and representatives from the private sector.

The opening session was held under the patronage of the Deputy Prime Minister for Development Affairs, Dr Jawad Al Anani, and membership of the chairman of the Amman

Chamber of Industry, Mr Khalid Abu Hassan, Representative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Jordan, Mr Olaf Koendgen, German Ambassador in Amman Mr Peter Mende, and the Head of the EU delegation in Jordan Mr Yves Gazzo.

The partnership agreement, currently under negotiation between Jordan and the EU

will lead to the creation of a free trade zone with a transitional period of 12 years. It will be finalized on 24 November in Brussels.

"Talk about the final signing of this agreement is a declaration that Jordan has moved towards a new broader horizon, that is international agreements," says Dr Anani.

He stresses that this membership brings new challenges to the local sector, especially industry.

"Our key elements to enter the world market economy are productivity, quality, transparency and accountability," Dr Anani maintains.

The local private sector has to improve its produce in line with international standards. Since you can't stop the wheel towards globalization, then you have to follow the race.

Remaining constant is not a way amidst rapid changes and developments and thus our economy, experts argue, should not be protected. The solution is to remove obstacles facing the trade exchange, opening borders and establishing a free trade zone, to encourage movement of services, industrial products, skills, technology and even manpower.

While emphasis is mostly given to the commercial aspect of the accord by all the media, Dr Anani stresses that the agreement is not only commercial, it includes cultural and political dimensions that are usually ignored.

The partnership agreement is seen by Mr Khalid Abu Hassan as a challenge that qualifies Jordan to have a role in the world economy and establish free trade zones.

He points out that there is a great gap in the trade balance between Jordan and Europe. But by entering partnership agreements, Abu Hassan says, we can work to achieve a sort of balance in favor of Jordan.

But as most Jordanian industries are small or medium sized and considered emerging ones, "this makes the situation more difficult and requires intense efforts to boost our standard and improve the quality of our products especially pharmaceuticals", Abu Hassan adds.

Fears by some local manufacturers from entering the membership agreement need to be removed, and here arises the importance of quality of local products so that they can compete internationally.

Dr Anani and Abu Hassan stress that entering international blocs will not be at the cost of inter-Arab trade cooperation but are complementary. "We have to revive the concept of the Arab Common Market", Abu Hassan stressed.

Dr Mohammed Al Halaiga, secretary general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade says that "the industrial sector is the most vulnerable to be affected by the philosophy to merge with the international economy, whether positively or negatively."

Available statistics show that there is a great deficit in Jordan's trade balance with EU. Trade with Europe represents 25 percent of Jordan's foreign trade. Imports from Europe constitute about 33 percent. In the first seven months of this year Jordan's imports to the EU were JD 558 million, or JD 1 billion (\$1.4 billion). Jordan's exports to Europe are about \$100 million a year.

Europe's aid to Jordan which totalled about \$1 billion. Since 1994, the aid was in the form of grants and soft loans, both bilateral and multilateral.

Moreover, in spite of heavy spending on education—the region spends about 14.9 percent of GDP—returns on education in terms of economic growth are less than in other developing regions. The main constraints to successful returns on education include inadequate access for girls and a bias towards preparing students for public sector jobs at a time when the public sector should be shrinking. With a growing majority of the population under 30, governments across the region are now placing top priority on education reform.

Third is improving the productivity of investment and the competitiveness of the economy.

Second is improving human skills. Because oil riches allowed for high wages and many non-oil countries sent citizens to work in oil economies, Mr Page says that real wages relative to skills are considered to be high in Mena.

Meanwhile, the agreements signed or under negotiation with the EU can play an important role in attracting inward investment, which remains at very low levels. The region is estimated to have attracted in 1996 a mere \$2.2 billion in net foreign direct investment, out of a total of \$109.5 billion for all developing countries.

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## Financial efficiency!

AMMAN (Star)—Dealing in stocks and securities is not easy. Though, as in other forms of businesses, it carries gains as well as losses.

It's important for a stockbroker to know fully about the returns of shares, and the hazards they may carry.

Deputy director of the Amman Financial Market (AFM), Mr Jalil Tareef presented a working paper on "Transparency in the Temporary Securities Law. He tackled the substantial and legislative aspects of the capital market in Jordan outlining the principle of transparency.

Presented to the Fifth Jordanian Science Week between 15-18 September, he said that transparency boosts securities' performance.

"Efficiency means that the

market provides potential for the security to disclose data concerning the market in general and the price of the security in particular."

So, in other words, the price of the bond or the stock should be in line with its dividend or risk. This should also comply with other information to maintain equilibrium between its return and risk.

"Thus any authority which tries to reorganize any financial market should put into consideration the need to achieve "market efficiency."

However, transparency includes regulations and legislations that rule the capital market by introducing measures to guarantee secure share dealings in the market.

The basic task of the new AFM restructuring is to separate the executive role from the supervisory one (securities will be left to the private sector, as a step towards privatization of the stock market).

This also involves the setting up of a governmental supervisory committee to reorganize the market, headed by the Central Bank of Jordan deputy governor, Michael Mario.

This committee is financially and administratively independent and directly linked to the prime minister. It will supervise the issuance of securities, organize dealings and monitor the disclosure of data related to stocks.

However, the bourse which includes brokers will be financially and administratively independent and non-profitable.

# World's slowest growing developing region

By Roula Khalaf

POLITICAL INSTABILITY, dependence on oil, high defence spending and a legacy of government control over the economy are factors that have weighed heavily on the economies of the Middle East and North Africa (Mena) and contributed to disappointing economic performance since the oil-slump of the mid-1980s.

The sluggish growth has left the region facing important challenges, but has also forced many countries across Mena to implement economic reforms.

According to the World Bank, gross domestic product grew at a mere 0.2 percent a year between 1980 and 1990 in Mena. It rose to 2.3 percent in 1990 to 1995, but still fell below annual population growth of 3 percent.

The World Bank, however, is forecasting a resumption of growth of 4 to 5 percent a year to the end of the century. While this will mark a significant improvement in the economies over recent years the region will remain the slowest growing among developing regions.

The region is diverse and the challenges vary in the oil-rich Gulf, the stabilization of oil prices since last year has alleviated the strain on finances and reduced budget deficits. But to ensure that economic prosperity is not dependent on fluctuations in oil prices, countries face the task of accelerating efforts already started to diversify their economies. At the same time, they are being urged to reduce subsidies and downsize generous welfare states.

It is the non-oil countries, however, that have performed better in recent years. They make up what is known as the "emerging Middle East and North Africa", which includes Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. Israel is considered an emerging market but its economy is far more

advanced than that of its Arab neighbors.

Governments in most of the emerging Mena nations have made important strides in restructuring their economies. They have also begun to develop capital markets, which are acting as a conduit for inward portfolio investment.

Their challenge today is to speed up privatization, as well as integration into the world economy, and allow a greater and more competitive role for a private sector that has long been sheltered. These countries have either signed or are negotiating association agreements with the European Union, with the aim of creating a free trade zone with the EU within 12 years. The move is expected to lead to greater trade among the Arab countries, in a region where past efforts at integration have been elusive.

The expansion of emerging Mena to include more countries is limited by the political instability from which suffer many countries in the region. At a time of breakdown in the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Palestinian Authority has been strangled in the past year by Israeli-imposed sanctions that have severely impacted the economy. In strife-torn Algeria, the government has followed International Monetary Fund reforms in recent years which will pay off when the country regains stability.

Across the region, the greatest worry facing governments is high unemployment rates—reaching nearly 20 percent in Jordan and more than 28 percent in Algeria. Unemployment is increasingly more pronounced among young graduates, a fact many governments consider a source of potential instability.

John Page, World Bank chief economist for Mena, says that to accelerate economic growth and create employment opportunities, reforms must tackle three main fronts.

First is raising investment levels, now running around 20 to 25 percent of GDP, compared with 35 to 40 percent in Asia. As the state can no longer afford the investments of the past, it must create the environment for the private sector to speed up investments and attract foreign investment. In several countries governments have recently allowed a greater private sector role in the development of infrastructure, with build/operate/transfer schemes in power generation under way in Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt, for example.

Meanwhile, the agreements signed or under negotiation with the EU can play an important role in attracting inward investment, which remains at very low levels. The region is estimated to have attracted in 1996 a mere \$2.2 billion in net foreign direct investment, out of a total of \$109.5 billion for all developing countries.

Second is improving human skills. Because oil riches allowed for high wages and many non-oil countries sent citizens to work in oil economies, Mr Page says that real wages relative to skills are considered to be high in Mena.

Moreover, in spite of heavy spending on education—the region spends about 14.9 percent of GDP—returns on education in terms of economic growth are less than in other developing regions. The main constraints to successful returns on education include inadequate access for girls and a bias towards preparing students for public sector jobs at a time when the public sector should be shrinking. With a growing majority of the population under 30, governments across the region are now placing top priority on education reform.

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## Housing Bank establishes investment fund



General Manager Abdel Qader Duweik (center)

THE AMBITIOUS step taken lately by the Housing Bank to establish the Housing Bank Jordan Fund at a capital of JD 20 million comes at an appropriate time.

The fund, which is the first investment of its kind in Jordan, is denominated in Jordanian dinars. Its creation comes at a time of new economic development encouraged by attractive incentive for investments.

It also comes at a time as Jordan leads a new strategy to enhance foreign investments by embarking on new package of economic and financial legislations, namely the new companies and the securities laws.

In a seminar held on the occasion of declaring the fund at the Forte Grand Hotel, last Tuesday, the Housing Bank General Manager, Mr Abdul Qader Al Duweik said that the "establishment of the investment fund reflects the Housing Bank's keenness to respond to the commitments of the coming stage and copes with the objectives of the monetary policy to guide foreign investments towards developing ventures, either at the primary or the secondary markets."

The fund is a closed-end company incorporated as a joint stock investment company with limited liability in Bahrain. It will become open-ended on the third anniversary of the closing date. At that time, shares will be available for issue and redemption at a price based on the prevailing Net Asset Value per Share.

The investment objective of the fund is to achieve long-term capital appreciation by investing in a portfolio of equity and equity related securities and debt instruments issued in Jordan.

The units of this fund will be offered for dealings at AFM and Bahrain securities market upon an agreement between the two sides," Mr Duweik maintained.

He outlined that the fund's investments will be restricted to Jordan and in Jordanian dinar.

It is a collective investment fund whose beneficiaries will be Jordanian investors (companies, individuals, saving and pension funds, and the Social Security Corp.), in addition to Arab and foreign investors who are willing to utilize investment opportunities in Jordan.

Mr Al Duweik stressed that the coming stage brings challenges to the Jordanian banking sector, for which it should be prepared by innovating new long-term and medium term investment instruments.

The Housing Bank has attracted contributions from Arab investors exceeding \$150 million to cover the increase of its capital from JD 25 million to JD 50 million.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arab Soc Insurance</li> <li>Arab Electricity</li> <li>National Engineering Industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arab Electricity</li> <li>Arab Investment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Levontek &amp; Poultry</li> <li>Arab Electricity</li> <li>Central Trade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arab International Fund</li> <li>Ready Cement</li> <li>Arab Investment</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Petroleum Securities</li> <li>JHICO</li> <li>Chemical Industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jordan Trade Center</li> <li>Car owner Union</li> <li>United Chemical Industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Plastic Industry</li> <li>Alfahd Industry</li> <li>International Ceramic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mineral Hima</li> <li>Nayak Dico and Metals</li> <li>National Plastic</li> </ul>	
General Price Pointer	173,380	173,790	174,590	174,900
Trade Volume	2340779	4714183	1913148	866570
Stock Volume	907915	2388731	1234231	62859
Highest Traded Stocks	363320	3052350	468175	175180
Arab Bank				

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# Fifteen years after the bloodbath, the world turns its back

Robert Fisk in Sabra and Chatila

EXACTLY 15 years ago, I walked into a place of such horror that for the first and only night of my life—I suffered ferocious nightmares. I had walked into the Palestinian camps of Sabra and Chatila in Beirut while Israel's Lebanese militia thugs were still finishing their work of butchery and rape. There were corpses covered in flies, disembowelled women, babies with bullets in their heads. To cross one street, I had to clamber over a pile of bodies, their arms and stomachs and heads pressing around my legs. All that moved were the flies that covered my face and the minute hands of the watches on dead wrists. On the other side of the pile was a mass grave. When I hid from the militiamen, I found myself crouching

beside a beautiful young woman whose blood was still running from a hole in her back.

I stopped counting bodies when I reached 100. They say that 600 were killed although there is, I am certain, a mass grave near Beirut golf course which contains perhaps another 1,400 Palestinians because truckloads of bodies were seen being driven there under the eyes of the Israelis and because 2,000 was the number of refugees listed as missing after the slaughter. Either way, the Israelis had surrounded the camp, had sent in the militiamen to kill "terrorists" and had then—according to Israel's own commission of enquiry—watched the killings going on for two days.

The world expressed outrage. And Israel's Minister of Defence, Ariel Sharon,

was sucked from his job after the commission found that he bore "personal responsibility" for the atrocity. Israel identified the leader of the gunmen who entered the camp as a Lebanese militiaman called Eli Hobeika. The world demanded that the murderers be brought to justice. And there were promises galore: a new Middle East peace, protection for the Palestinians, an end to the Lebanese bloodbath.

And today, walking through the fifth and sewage and ruined (but still inhabited) huts of Sabra and Chatila, it was difficult to avoid the thought that the survivors of that most terrible massacre—understandably regarded in the Arab world as a war crime—have been kicked in the face by the world which expressed so much shame and revulsion. The mass grave is now covered

in mud—children were playing football on it the other morning—and the Palestinians live among 20ft high heaps of rat-infested garbage. The smell of faeces seeps out of doorways where old women huddle beneath fading monochrome photographs of their dead. "And what did the world do for us?" Deebah Saleh Hussein asked me in the little hut she calls home. "What did you journalists do for us when you made us reopen our wounds?"

Deebah Hussein lost her husband Yonis, her four sons—Gazi, Ahmed, Madi and Mohamed—her son-in-law Hussein Ali, her own brother Hussein Saleh and his son Saleh, a cousin, the husband of another cousin and his 18-year-old daughter Afifi. All of them were hacked to death with axes by Israel's proxy militiamen. And when Deebah Hussein asked me what the world had done for the people of Sabra and Chatila, I had to answer her with one word: nothing.

Even in the immediate aftermath of the killings, the press concentrated on Israel's self-examination rather than the victims and their surviving relatives, not to mention the purpose of the slaughter. In its first cover issue on Sabra and Chatila, Newweek's headline read: "Israel in Torment." The other main reports were entitled: "The Anguish of America's Jews" and "The Troubled Soul of Israel"—and all this when one might have expected that torment and anguish to the uniquely that of Palestinians like Deebah Hussein, whose entire family was cut to pieces in Beirut. Not so, it seems. Had Palestinians massacred 2,000 Israelis 15 years ago, would anyone doubt that the world's press and television would be remembering so terrible a deed? Yet this week, not a single newspaper in the United States—or Britain for that matter—has even mentioned the anniversary of Sabra and Chatila.

And why should they? For the Palestinians in Beirut are non-persons. They or their parents fled from Palestine in 1948—from that part of Palestine which became Israel—and can never return. They are cut out—totally—from the so-called Oslo "peace process," save for a dismissive reference to "refugees" in the last section. Nor can they live cannot work: they cannot have Lebanese citizenship. And they exist without protection. Three years after the massacres, Sabra and Chatila was eight times besieged by Muslim Lebanese militiamen. So many died under the shells that the Palestinians buried their dead in basements. I saw some of these subterranean graves the other day, bedecked with dust-covered, withered wreaths.

And what of Messrs Sharon and Hobeika, the Israeli minister and the Lebanese Maronite whom Israel held responsible? Well, Mr Sharon is back in the Israeli cabinet as minister of national infrastructure. And quite incredible as it may seem, Mr Hobeika now holds a remarkably similar job in Lebanon. He is the minister of electricity and hydraulics in Beirut. And what of Sabra and Chatila? The Lebanese government, it seems, is planning to construct a spanking new motor-



The day after the carnage: Palestinians still remember when the world turned its back

way through the middle, a product of Beirut's wealth and reconstruction which will force the Palestinians from their huts. No one knows where they will go.

It's not surprising, therefore, that Deebah Hussein would like to get away, at least for a few months, from the heat and slums and shit. She has a daughter, Huda, who survived that massacre and now lives in Chicago. Deebah says she holds American citizenship. So Deebah set off recently to the US embassy in Damascus to ask for a visitor's visa. She was told, she says, that she could have no visa if she did not have children or a husband or property in Lebanon. So even 15 years after the bloodbath of Sabra and Chatila, the world is still punishing the survivors for being victims. ■

Independent

## The bingo tycoon gambling with peace

By Judy Dempsey

IRVING MOSKOWITZ'S arrival in Israel could not have been more timely for Jewish settlers.

They were furious with Madeleine Albright, US secretary of state, who during her trip to the region told Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, to postpone any expansion or building of new settlements.

Last week, with impeccable timing, settlers moved into two houses Mr Moskowitz had bought in Ras Al Amoud, an east Jerusalem neighbourhood entirely inhabited by Palestinians. After long negotiations with the government, the settlers agreed to leave. But few peace activists believe Mr Moskowitz will give up his attempts to build a Jewish settlement at Ras Al Amoud.

"It is hard to know what Moskowitz's motives are," said Danny Seidemann, a lawyer and leading Israeli peace campaigner. "He represents the nationalists, the messianics and those who want to destroy the peace process. He is trying to set the agenda for Jerusalem."

Mr Moskowitz cannot understand what the fuss is all about. "The entire subject of whether I should build or not is ludicrous because I have a right to build. I am sure the prime minister wants me to be here. He knows me."

Mr Moskowitz does indeed know the prime minister and the governing Likud party. He helped finance its election campaign last year and that of the Third Way, the small coalition partner headed by Avigdor Kahalani, the public security minister. Mr Kahalani arranged what Palestinians said was a face-saving compromise that allowed Mr Netanyahu retain support of the settlers and his nationalist coalition partners.

Nor is Mr Moskowitz a stranger to Jerusalem. This time last year, the Miami-based millionaire funded the opening of a new entrance to an archaeological tunnel near Muslim holy sites in east Jerusalem. It sparked off a wave of unrest throughout the West Bank in which 61 Palestinians and 15 Jews were killed. Palestinians fear the same could happen again in Ras Al Amoud.

"What Moskowitz does not understand is that he is undermining the delicate patterns of life in the city and he does not even live here," said Mr Seidemann.

Grandson of a Jerusalem pedlar, 70-year-old Mr Moskowitz retired to Miami from California 10 years ago after making his fortune investing in private hospitals and bingo parlours.

Retirement did not come easily to the father of eight children. He set his sights on acquiring property in Ras Al Amoud, purchasing 3.5 acres during the 1980s with the aim of building a Jewish neighbourhood.

At that time, Ras Al Amoud residents had applied for permission to build new houses. But Eli Suissa, then head of the Jerusalem Planning Committee, linked the approval and implementation of the plan for the local residents to the approval and implementation of a plan for Mr Moskowitz's Jewish neighbourhood. Mr Suissa is now Israel's interior minister.

Peace Now, the independent Israeli movement, says the plan "turns the 11,000 Palestinian residents into hostages in the hands of the Israelis."

"To deny this just because I am Jewish and the Arabs are opposed to it is racism," he said. But peace activists think it is time Mr Moskowitz is sent home to the US.

"Let him play his ideological games in his own back yard," said Mr Seidemann. ■

Financial Times Syndication

## Iraqis still hungry, bitter after 6 years of UN sanctions

Continued from page 1

to feed their families. Scientists and university professors, government employees and other professionals, most of whom now earn less than \$10 or \$15 a month, are gathered at the city's cavernous auction houses selling off their furniture, rugs, wedding rings and wristwatches.

"I sold my sofa already, and my kitchen equipment, and now I must sell my carpets," said Najat Abdel-Alal, a 37-year-old teacher who is waiting nervously at the Al Zohur auction house. "It is very difficult, of course, but I need the money. And it's not just me. Everyone I know is selling their things."

In hospitals, the combination of malnutrition and the perpetual shortage of medicine has had a devastating effect. At Saddam Children's Hospital, for instance, one ward is full of malnourished children with distended bellies and glazed eyes, 95 percent of whom, the doctor says, are sure to die.

"I don't have meat or milk to give him," said one woman, whose son, Natak Hashim, lies listlessly in a crib, all bones and droopy skin.

Presumably such conditions—a starved population and a thriving ruling class—were not what the international community intended when sanctions were first imposed. Back then, sanctions were seen as a short-term measure for quick results, because the international community was unified behind them, because they were militarily enforceable, and because Iraq relied heavily on one commodity for export, making the sanctions easier to monitor and control.

But it soon became clear that Hussein would not be brought to his knees by the suffering of his people and could continue for a long time to defy the world. Growing concerned about the humanitarian effects of the sanctions, the United Nations repeatedly offered Iraq an opportunity to sell limited amounts of oil in order to buy food and medicine.

Under the food-for-oil deal finally reached, Iraq may sell \$2 billion of oil every six months, deposit the proceeds in a closely monitored account and use the money to buy specified, approved foods, medicine and other humanitarian supplies.

But the food-for-oil deal has proved frustrating, particularly after its relief supplies were delayed for months. Even now that it is finally up and running—with full food "baskets" going out to people—it will, at best, only slow the suffering. The new food ration, for instance, will



Joining the food queue is a never ending saga for Iraqi women

provide the average Iraqi with 2,030 calories, up from its previous level of 1,250. But even the new calorie level is insufficient, nutritionists say, and the food still include no meat or eggs or any animal protein.

"Children, mothers, the aged and sick—are now dying," said Lockton Morrissey, the Middle

East regional manager for CARE, "while the outside world mistakenly believes it has solved Iraq's problems with the much-delayed oil-for-food shipments."

The problem is, no one is quite sure where to go from here, and the questions raised by the sanctions grow ever more

pressing: For how long is it morally acceptable for the world to starve the Iraqis? Why has Hussein been able to remain in power despite such a strict embargo? How is it possible to keep the pressure on the regime while mitigating the suffering of the needy?

US officials—who have long been the chief proponents of tough sanctions—argue that the blame lies with Hussein himself. He caused the humanitarian crisis by hoarding the country's scant resources, they say, by rejecting the food-for-oil deal for several years and refusing to comply with UN demands.

Despite the pain imposed by the sanctions, American officials argue that they are basically working, and must not be lifted. Sanctions, they argue, have successfully kept the dictator from rebuilding his army and have left him unable to mount the kind of challenge to America's oil interests that he did when he invaded Kuwait.

Still, the pressure to lift the sanctions is already beginning. There's pressure from Russia and France, which are eager to resume trade with Iraq as soon as it meets certain minimum requirements. Oil companies around the world are eager for the lucrative petroleum concessions. Humanitarian groups want to relieve the suffering. If Iraq dismantles its biological, chemical and nuclear weapons programs, as required by UN Resolution 688, there would be significant pressure in the Security Council to end the oil embargo despite US objections. ■

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

## Some American Jews Frustrated With Netanyahu

By Caryle Murphy

WASHINGTON—Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright had an enthusiastic source of domestic support when she struck a tough balance in Israel last week,

demanding that Palestinians crack down on terrorism and that Israelis halt "provocative" unilateral acts that jeopardize peace talks.

Albright's hoosters are prominent, mainstream American Jewish leaders who have begun publicly to signal their frustration with the policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu—which they consider partly responsible for the breakdown in the peace process—by urging the Clinton administration to adopt a more activist role in dealing with both sides.

These Jewish leaders, who include major contributors to the Democratic Party, have concluded that a more muscular US role, even if it involves pressure on Israel, is necessary to revive negotiations over implementing the 1993 Oslo Accords, several of them said in recent interviews.

They said they have asked the administration, in private meetings and public letters, to use its influence with Israel to discourage one-sided actions that damage the climate for peace, such as settlement

Yoffie, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, which represents the nation's 1.5 million Reform Jews. "It was absolutely essential for the (US) president's representative to make clear there would be no bending on the issue of terrorism."

"In that context," Yoffie added, "the rest of her statements...were also appropriate because...she was pointing out to the government of Israel that what they do is also important. It can't be solely and exclusively a discussion of terrorism."

J.J. Goldberg, author of *Jewish Power*, a book about US Jews, said, "What we're seeing is a much greater willingness by mainstream Jews and Jewish groups to distance themselves from Israeli policy."

These groups are becoming more willing to encourage American pressure because there's a widespread anger at the Likud over the perception that it's undermining the peace process."

Mann and Yoffie are among American Jewish leaders who initially kept private their concerns about Netanyahu, who won election in May 1996 as an opponent of the Oslo Accords. But in light of Israel's deteriorating relations with the Palestinians, nearly 100 prominent Jews went public early last month in an advertisement in *The New York Times* that warmly embraced a speech by Albright last month promising a more active US mediating role. Headlined "Thank You, Secretary of State Albright," the ad was signed by prominent individuals and endorsed by the two largest US Jewish religious organizations, Yoffie's Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. Other signatories included not only representatives of leftist Jewish peace groups but also former leaders of such mainstream organizations as the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations (AIAPAC) and the United Jewish Appeal. ■

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

## World response to refugee flows should start with the causes of flight

"LEAVE YOUR homes to save your lives." The majority of refugees in the Middle East have heard this sentence all too often. They have been forced to abandon their livelihoods, their lives turned upside-down by forces beyond their control. Amnesty International said today.

"Many governments in the Middle East driven by political expediency and self-interest order or condone violations of human rights," Amnesty International said. "Rarely does a year go past without another mass flow of refugees in the region."

In its new report, *Refugees in the Middle East: Fear, flight and forcible exile*, issued as part of its ongoing Refugee Campaign, the human rights organization documents how the Middle East provides shelter to an estimated 5.6 million refugees, among them individuals, families and whole communities who have fled from torture, killings and campaigns of terror, discrimination and intimidation

against ethnic groups.

Such violations are not new to the region. In 1948-1949 around 750,000 Palestinians fled their homes as the new state of Israel was formed. The Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s drove thousands of people to cross nearby borders. In the years up to 1989, as a result of the continuing Afghan civil war, around two million refugees ended up in Iran.

During the Gulf War, hundreds of thousands of Kuwaitis, Iraqis and other nationals fled from Kuwait and Iraq. Around two million other Iraqis—Kurds and Arabs—fled when Iraqi government forces brutally crushed uprisings in the country. Since the 1980s, hundreds of Bahraini nationals have been forcibly expelled from Bahrain, losing the protection of their own state.

In the aftermath of the Gulf War, Kuwait expelled hundreds of people, mostly Iraqis and Palestinians, to Iraq. Thousands of people, members of the

hidden (stateless) community, were caught on the Iraqi side of the border with Kuwait after the cease-fire and were not allowed to return to Kuwait.

People from the Middle East who have sought asylum in Europe have faced many problems and dangers. Some countries have obstructed access. In 1996, Ahmad, a Syrian refugee, was bundled onto a plane in Romania and sent back home. Turkey has attached a geographic reservation to the UN Refugee Convention excluding non-European asylum seekers. Iraqis and Iranians, who form the largest refugee groups in Turkey, are not recognized as refugees by the Government.

European governments have urged their nationals to leave Algeria because it is too dangerous. However, they refuse to acknowledge that Algerian asylum-seekers would also be in danger if returned home and cannot be protected by their authorities. ■

كنا من العراق



# La Divina still casts her spell

Maria Callas: *The Tigress and the Lamb*, by David Bret, Robson Books, \$18.95.

Reviewed by Peter Aspdon

MARIA CALLAS died in the autumn of 1977, exactly one month after the body of Elvis Presley was discovered, bloated and ignominious, in the toilet of his Graceland home. It was a neat piece of timing for analysts of contemporary culture, who were presented with an orgy of easy contrasts: where Elvis was ingenious, exploited, amiable, inept, Callas was knowing, fiery, manipulative, monstrous. The Greek soprano was, in the words of Luciano Visconti, "almost a sickness, the kind of actress that has passed for all time." Elvis just got sick. Both were possessed of startling sexual charisma, but handled it badly. There were strange symmetries in their lives: she shed fat to re-invent herself; he got fat trying to forget himself.

But there were other similarities, too. Both redefined their art, both acquired devoted followings, both blew it, their art and their lives. Savour this, the 20th anniversary of their deaths, for future commemorations will surely be overshadowed by the memory of another untimely demise. They called Elvis the King, and Callas La Divina; but the self-styled Queen of Hearts looks set to trump them all.

Callas was not the sort of woman who would campaign for a ban on landmines; indeed she spent much of her life behaving like one. Her victims fellow singers, critics, opera house managers would enter into feuds, rush into print to denounce her or, occasionally,



Callas in her famous Medea role

forgive her and fall back under the spell. And then she would explode again.

Callas's life made it acceptable, indeed imperative, for commentators to lapse into cliché. There really wasn't any chasm between the rhetoric of her art and the substance of her life. She famously advised her own mother to drown herself, in a letter made public by Time

magazine; how could we then fail to believe in her Medea, slaughtering her own children?

The most vivid picture of her strong, occasionally grotesque features came not from a performance but from an Associated Press photograph of her infamous confrontation with two law enforcement officers in Chicago. "I will not be sued, I have the voice of an angel," she shrieked, according to David Bret's new biography, only to follow with the less-than-angelic rejoinder: "I'll never sing in this fucking horse-shit town again."

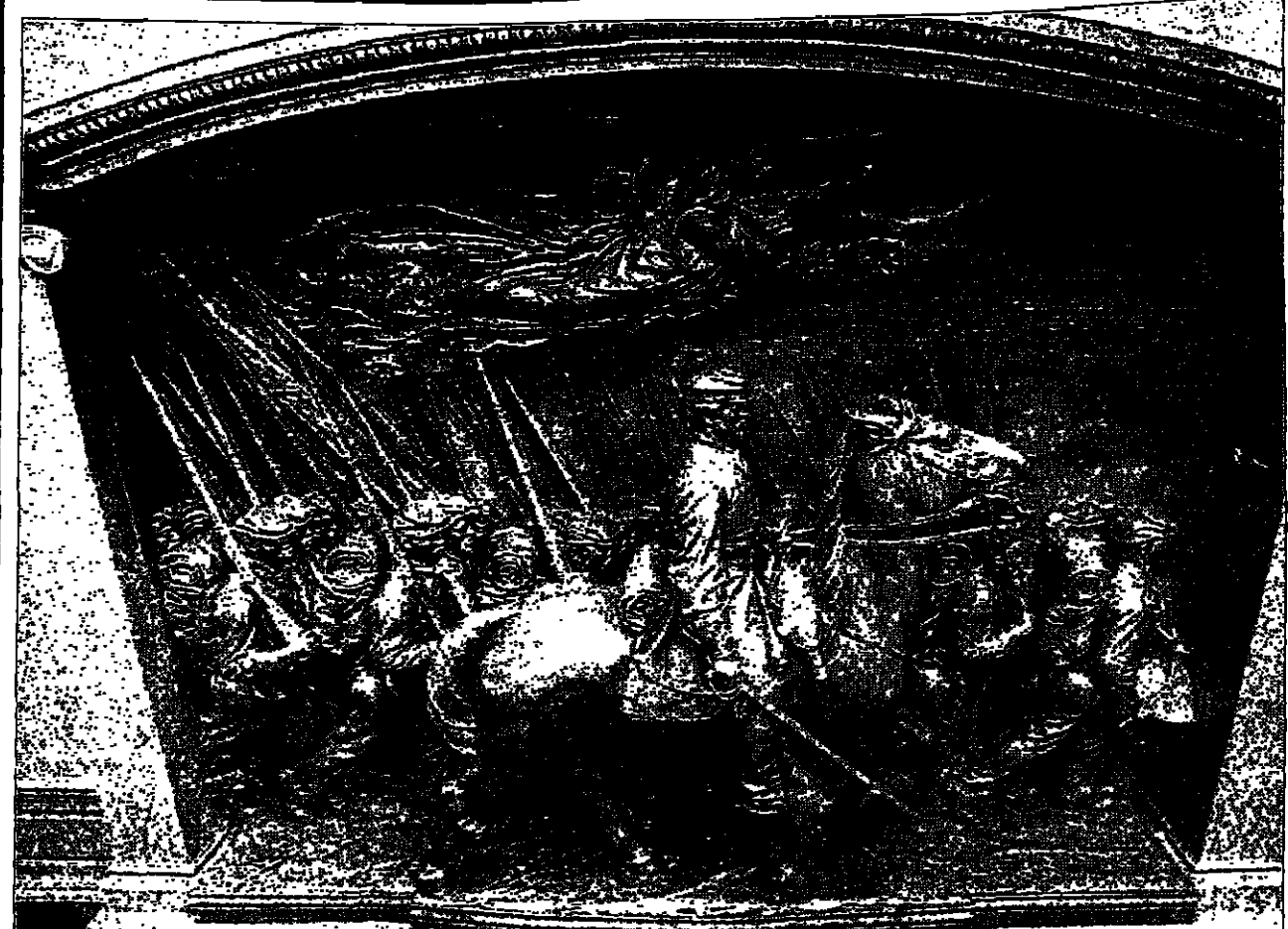
Little wonder that Bret is seduced by the sheer wealth of anecdote in Callas's life story, but he largely misses the point. By far the most interesting thing about Callas was her artistry. There have been other stars who made themselves beautiful, who threw temper

tantrums, who had affairs with millionaires. But the devotion displayed by such a proud woman towards her vocation was humbling. Taking advantage of this anniversary, EMI have rereleased the entire Callas catalogue in digitally remastered form (as well as releasing for the first time a 1960 pirate recording of Donizetti's *Poliuto*). It is a paradoxical gesture. Callas received her greatest reviews for her live interpretations of roles which, in some cases, had been virtually eliminated from the core repertoire. Such was her dramatic instinct and acting genius that glowing faults in her voice were overlooked the early 1950s, before the age of widespread filming of performances. She only left one complete act of opera (from a 1964 Covent Garden Tosca) on film, and some snippets from recitals. One shudders to think what she would have thought of digital remastering, this driven woman who put dramatic truth so far ahead of technical purity in her work.

But those in charge of the project say they are sensitive to charges of over-interference. Most of the restoration work consisted of cleaning up crackles and clicks, smoothing over rough edits and eliminating extra noise, such as the rumble of the London Underground in the sessions recorded in Kingsway Hall, which would have been inaudible in the recording conditions of the 1950s.

But there is a limit to the amount of aural engineering that can be done. The very best of Maria Callas Giullini's La Traviata, Karajan's Lucia di Lammermoor, both live recordings from 1955 can still sound boxy, shrill and thin. Like the sumptuous photographs used in the re-packaging of the discs, and like Elvis Presley's Sun singles, they are of their time, but so full of craft and bite that they can survive any amount of anniversary kitsch. In ten years' time, they will surely continue to take their place in the charts, tucked behind Elton John, as a new generation discovers the talent behind the temperament all over again. ■

Financial Times Syndication



Famed sculpture of Black Civil War Regiment moves at National Gallery in Washington. This is the first African-American infantry unit in the Union Army, trained nearby and then marched south to fight in the Civil War with the bloody bravery also commemorated in the movie "Glory."

Glenn Gould

## A paranoid perfectionist

By Christian Tyler

He was a happy baby. Where other babies cried, he hummed. Where they beat their fists, he wagged his little fingers as if he was playing scales. His proud father recalled these infant traits as early symptoms of the prodigy that was to become Glenn Gould, the most idiosyncratic piano virtuoso of the century.

Peter Oswald, a psychiatrist and amateur violinist who knew the artist, wonders if they were symptoms of something else: not infantile autism, exactly, but something like Asperger's syndrome, a milder variant of that obsessive condition.

Glenn Gould was a walking pharmacy who consulted more doctors than any man alive and died, aged 50, in 1982. He never reached the derelict state of David Heiligott, the Australian pianist and hero of the recent film *Shine*, who seems to have retained some technique but entirely lost his grip on music. Gould is more the Bobby Fischer of the keyboard: brilliant, original, world-class, neurotic.

Oswald died before this book was published and had previously written about Schumann and Nijinsky. No doubt the "crazy genius" school of biography that he represents will always be popular: after all, what could be more intri-

guing than the medical record of such an eccentric marvel? But it is never very satisfactory.

The fascinating thing about Gould was not his state of mind before and after playing the piano, but the extraordinary idea of the music which he projected while performing it. His communion with sound was absolute. His command of structure was total. Even when he was misinterpreting, he was mesmerizing.

Oswald never directly asks the question which his interesting accumulation of facts and witnesses seems to be leading to. Was Glenn Gould a musical genius because he was mad, or mad because he was a musical genius? And what is genius, anyway?

Gould was not mad, of course, but he was certainly not normal. Everyone knows about his strange habits: the gloves, coat and muffler worn in high summer, the long nocturnal telephone calls, his odd posture at the keyboard on his rickety little chair.

True, he was king of the



Gould in earlier days

hypocondriacs. He was a solipsist, mother-fixated, childish control freak, a pill-dependent insomniac who preferred the dark to the light and animals to people, a cold, selfish man who wanted women but found them too difficult to love. But he was also handsome, humorous, intelligent and sane. "I hope people won't be blinded to my playing by what have been called my personal eccentricities," he once wrote. "I look as though I were playing the piano with my nose. But these aren't personal eccentricities they're simply the occupational hazards of a highly subjective business."

He poked fun at his hypocondria ("I have several types for diseases which I am expecting to use in later life") and he poked fun at psychiatrists; not him for never going into proper analysis. He thrived on mimicry, impersonation and puns ("The Dodecaphonist's dilemma" is his essay on the serialist composers). He admired his Toronto stockbroker, Bache & Co, and he always kept in touch with the market while on tour.

Glenn Gould (the family was then called Gold; no Jewish lineage has been established) was born the only child to a 41-year-old mother. It was a good start for the psychoanalysts and not bad for him. He had perfect pitch, a fantastic musical memory and could read music before words. His musical mother Florence was so ambitious for him, and so fearful for him, that she forbade mention of the word "Mozart" in the house. Glenn's attitude to the composer was ambivalent ever after.

The boy developed not only a beautiful tone, but virtuosic speed and control a control so complete that it can be called authoritarian. Friends claimed he played fast to show off and to remind the world that he could keep up with Horowitz, the only person of whose fame he was jealous. When he played slowly he shaped the phrases even individual notes with unique power. The French violinist Bruno Monsiegeon said Gould's account of Bach's Inventions changed his life.

Oswald thinks the pianist's odd posture at the keyboard had something to do with a tactile triangular relationship between mother, son and piano. Gould explained, however, that his low seat allowed him to liberate the fingers from the weight of arms and shoulders, to pull the sound out of the piano. He hummed not just because he was taught to sing while he learned, but because his whole body was caught up in his "highly subjective busi-

ness." This absorption was heightened for him when, one day, a maid turned on the vacuum cleaner close to the piano. He discovered that the music suddenly sounded better "and those parts which I couldn't actually hear sounded best of all."

His fascination with the rhythms and structures of Baroque counterpoint, and his belief that all the voices should get equal treatment (he was an accomplished organist) reached its zenith in the two famous recordings he made of the Goldberg (or "Gouldberg") Variations. It also had odd consequences.

One was his invention of "contrapuntal radio," best illustrated in the radio documentary *The Idea of North* which he made for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Three overlapping voices were set to background sounds, like a Bach fugue over a continuous pedal.

Another was his decision brutally to exaggerate Chopin's left-hand accompaniments. Oswald recalls hearing Gould's version of the B minor sonata on radio five years before he died. It sounded, says the author, as if "the melody was a frigid woman being forced to kiss a man she despises."

Gould was radiating his self-love onto the composer and his music, according to Oswald. Exaggerated staccato, outrageous tempo, a total disregard for the composer's own indications, all were part of this musical narcissism. He even had the nerve to tell Oskar Morawetz, a contemporary composer who protested at Gould's interpretation, that he didn't understand his own music. His treatment of Beethoven, and especially of the later, "too theatrical" Mozart, could be downright shocking and was probably meant to be.

The purpose of music, Gould once wrote, was "not the momentary ejection of adrenaline, but the gradual, lifelong construction of a state of wonder and serenity." Hardly the words of a madman.

Oswald does not attempt to complete his diagnosis of this paranoid perfectionist. Nor was the autopsy conducted after which the author quotes from Franz Kraemer, a CBC music producer. Gould, he said, was "a genius and a monster. But he was also the most unbelievable gifted, capable and imaginative pianist I've known in my entire life."

Having read the doctor's notes, we know the patient better. The musician, however, continues to speak for himself. ■

Financial Times Syndication

## ROCK TRACKS

By Stacy Jenei Smith

Carly Simon confesses she made her new "Film Noir" album on such a shoestring budget, "There was a lot of high drama and tension involved. We did the whole album live. I'd be watching the clock, knowing that if we went three minutes overtime, we'd have to pay the orchestra again." Why? Says Carly, "The record company (Arista) wasn't so sure how an album of these songs would go over and they didn't want to sink a lot of money into it. And I had a project that didn't work out last year —

Carly Simon I was trying to record an album in my barn — and I lost a lot of money on it, so I couldn't dip into my own resources as much as I would have otherwise." Ultimately, the restrictions led to "a spontaneous feel" to the album, and Carly likes that, though she admits she would have been more persnickety about her vocals if she could have been. Famously afflicted with stage fright, Simon says she's considering doing a few "one-off" concerts in support of "Film Noir" — but not a tour. "Film Noir" is also being used to spearhead a drive for Martin Scorsese's Film Foundation, to preserve classic pictures in danger of disintegration. She was set to sing this week at a gala being staged for the foundation titled "AMC Salutes Film Noir." The gig will be shown on AMC in October.

If all went according to plan, by the time you read this, jazz names Kirk Whalum, Paul Jackson Jr. and George Duke will have united at Nashville's Acuff Theater at Opryland to bring us something completely different: "The Gospel According to Jazz." The songfest was to be recorded for an album. "It's about half and half new material I've written or co-written — and traditional hymns we've taken and done something fresh with," reports Whalum. Among the latter: jazz treatments of "Blessed Assurance" and the spirituals "Wade in the Water" and "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child." Whalum notes, "It's very exciting because of the other two artists involved — and because it's a live record with no holds barred stylistically." Whalum adds, "My manager, being a manager, pointed out that the gospel idiom is starting to outsell the jazz idiom." Whalum, newly on Warner Bros. Records, says the label has right of first refusal on the live disc. He also has his first studio disc for Warners, "Colors," just out. Next month, he'll be out touring — and be seen on a Whitney Houston in concert special on HBO.

Sax man Dave Koz has put a little treat on his upcoming "December Makes Me Feel This Way" holiday album — a surprise hidden track made with his buddy, "News Radio's" Phil Hartman. "Phil is a friend of mine, and we did this thing that's totally outrageous and fun: a beat poet version of 'The Night Before Christmas,' with bongos and the whole bit. We completely improvised a musical thing around his reading."

Jazz recording artist Dee Dee Bridgewater admits doing a tribute album to Ella Fitzgerald was "a frightening proposition because the immediate reaction is to compare me to her." Nevertheless, she's come out with "Dear Ella," her Verve Records tribute to the First Lady of Jazz. Admits Dee Dee, 47, "When I was younger, I was compared to her and I was insulted" — so anxious was she to establish her own identity in the recording world. Then when Ella died last year (June '96), Bridgewater naturally expected "tributes would be popping up all over the place, and when it didn't happen, I proposed the idea to Verve. I had no idea they'd make it such a priority."

PERKY & BEANZ by Russell Myers



ELWOOD by Ben Templeton & Tom Forman

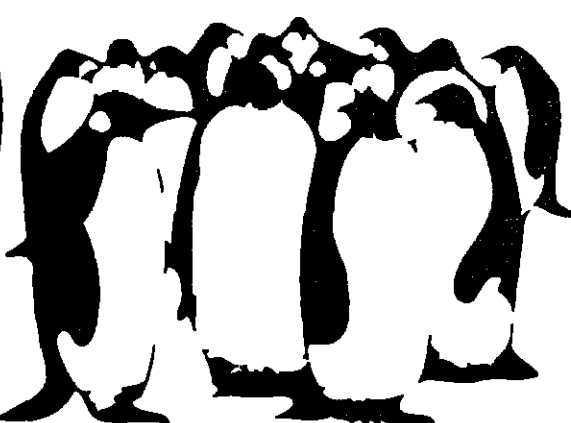


CATFISH by Fred Wagner & Tom Cone





## AROUND TOWN



## New look Fanta unveiled in Thailand

● The Coca-Cola Company has given its Fanta brand a new look. The global unveiling of the newly designed packaging graphics for Fanta—the biggest-selling orange soft drink in the world—took place in Bangkok, Thailand last Tuesday.

The new design, developed with input from thousands of teenagers around the world, features a white background with a bold, blue Fanta logo and a stylized orange and green leaf.

The designers were South African-based KSDP Pentagraph.

Thailand was chosen for the worldwide launch because Fanta is such a huge success there, accounting for 80 percent of flavoured soft drink sales. Last year sales of Fanta in Thailand soared by 15 percent, making it the fastest growing soft drink in the country. Fanta is available in 188 countries.

"The new graphics reflect the brand's identity as fun, contemporary and great tasting," said Kirk Wheeler, region manager for Coca-Cola Thailand Limited. "We believe they will be a big hit with Thai teenagers."



## Hard Rock Cafe

## Amman's newest bright spot

By Kerry O'Neill  
Special to The Star

Glowing pale green on Abdoun's night-time skyline like a recently landed UFO, is Amman's Hard Rock Cafe. Lately it celebrated its one month anniversary, with a live performance by local band Black Iris and free, candle-covered cake distributed to all, complying with their 'Love All. Serve All' philosophy. Since August this year, Hard Rock Cafe has attracted thousands of people from students to whole families with children, who come to enjoy the food, drink and music.

Served by staff dressed in nostalgia-inducing uniforms inspired by dance-hall classics and surrounded by musical memorabilia such as framed platinum discs, "You can forget where you are for an evening and believe you are anywhere in the world," said one Yemeni businessman.

But is this Western haven really so flawless? Apparently not. Ms Nadia Toubia, a New Yorker who has been frequenting Hard Rock Cafes in America for many years, says "The place itself has great potential but at the moment, the service is letting it down." Ms Toubia had to prompt her server many times to get her food order, and felt obliged to speak to the bar manager about standards, adding "If they had a months intensive training first, why do I get served a 'shot' in a wine glass?"

Much of the produce and hardware such as glasses had to be imported, a plus for the management which accepts the risk of delays in receiving supplies.

Many of those staff initially recruited trained for a month, worked for a month and then left to resume their studies. This necessitated further recruitment, so newer and part time staff are still getting used to their positions. In any new establishment such prob-

lems are to be anticipated, but it's the world-class reputation of the Hard Rock chain that makes you less forgiving when things go wrong.

A source at the cafe said "This isn't France or the USA, there simply aren't any professional waiters in the job market here. But there is on-going training and things are improving all the time."

The concept of a Hard Rock Cafe here in Jordan is as novel and exciting as the jobs are to the workers, who need to be instilled with Hard Rock's mentality and philosophies.

One diner who'd come to hear local popular band Black Iris play, said "Everyone is very enthusiastic here and I love the atmosphere."

For Black Iris, the Hard Rock Cafe is an ideal venue for their gigs, which have become a monthly fixture. The keyboarder has been involved with the band since its formation six years ago, and says "Playing regularly at this venue is so good for us. Apart from a concert several months ago, practicing and finding decent locations for gigs has proved very difficult."

As the Jordan music scene isn't exactly inundated with western pop bands it was easy for them to become complacent, perhaps letting standards slip.

But being thrust back into the limelight, courtesy of Hard Rock, means they have to maintain a serious attitude to building their



One of the views of the Hard Rock Cafe in the world

reputation, delivering a diverse range of music from Oasis and U2 to the Beatles with professionalism.

Despite "teething problems," the Hard Rock Cafe is essentially a sound operation, and a valuable addition to Amman's day and night-life. There are surprisingly few obvious tourists there, who usually gravitate towards the possibility of alcohol and late-night rev-

elling; whether through lack of advertising or the Cafe's location away from the city center remains to be seen.

For budget travellers the cost of food and drink places it out of their market but for a different if pricey night out, it certainly beats *halehel*. And seeing the staff join forces to dance the "YMCA" beats people-watching in Downtown anyway. ■

## Jazzed in Amman

By Bilal Hijawi  
Special to The Star

I've been to many jazz gigs in the past, but never in Amman. Last week, a trio jazz band with lead pianist Laurent De Wilde was a welcome surprise brought by the French Cultural Center. The trio entertained Jordan's music fans at the Royal Cultural Center with an excellent gig of Eastern and Western themes.

French pianist De Wilde, New Yorkers Ira Coleman and Dion Parson, base and drummer, fueled the hall with a charismatic music dialogue with sensational harmony. They hammered down the right notes and produced a powerful jazz performance.

The band was a definite success, and the Amman audience seemed to surprise the musicians with the intensity of their interaction.

"On this tour and before, we've played

in various Arab cities; I can tell you now, the Amman audience is the most alive and was very responsive to our music," said De Wilde.

Jazz masters Charlie Parker and Duke Ellington were played; as well as a piano solo from Woody Allen's "I'm through with love". One excellent original piece played was "Totem", composed by De Wilde in memory of his dad.

Musicians wrestle their instruments and accessories to bring the right tunes out. Although the musicians sincerely spoke of a better overall environment in Jordan, they voiced their reserves on the "limited options of equipment and instruments available to them". Musicians are accustomed to being asked to choose from a range of amplifiers and instruments.

However, "the venue at the RCC was great and very close to home," they all agreed and bettered the whole experience to that of elsewhere in the Middle East.

In the future we hope Jordan's music scene is kept alive with various musical experiences like this one. It costs little to make it happen, and many music patrons are willing to foot the bill for such entertainment, as was evidenced by attendance at this event. Ticket price was very reasonable at JD5 for a two-hour live entertainment. ■



## Drawing old Amman in batik



UNDER THE patronage of HRH Princess Wijdan Ali, The Jordan Craft Center, Al Aydi, organized an exhibition titled "Arab Madinas in Batik," by the American artist Darleen Wilkerson. Her exhibition, which is about Arab cities is a very interesting one simply because of the material and substance she uses.

Her exhibition in Amman which was opened in Amman earlier this month is proving very successful with 12 of her 42 paintings on display already sold to local art collectors. Since settling in Jordan, Wilkerson continued to paint avidly on batik, something that was original to Amman's art community.

She examined every nook and cranny of Jordan's past and modern architecture, painting old houses and contrasting them with the old alleyways of Amman.

Wilkerson is not new to this part of the world. After leaving California she settled down in Yemen, where she established an art program for a private Yemeni school.

For five years there, she continued to photograph and paint women's costumes which required traditional arts and crafts. While in Yemen, she met and married Dr Jan Karpowicz, a consultant to the Yemen Ministry of Agriculture.

Later on, the couple moved to Poland. There, Wilkerson became a consultant for a non-governmental agency to help artists around the world. Most of her work during that time was in Central Asia and Pakistan.

Batik is a distinct process where the design is produced by painting wax on areas on the cotton cloth. After doing this, the batik is dipped into a colored dye bath.

The artists adds that after each waxing, the cloth is dipped in darker colors. By the time the Batik reaches its last dye bath the cloth is totally covered in wax.

The effect of all this is unusually striking as evidenced by her show that includes paintings, jackets, silk scarves etc. May Khoury, director of Al Aydi says that the current works "very much relate to our own history and heritage."

In her paintings, we can see our own city with its old houses centered by the mosque or church. The exhibition ends today, Thursday, 25 September.

Al Aydi is the oldest Craft Center in Amman having direct dealings with more than one 100 artists. ■

## Eat your way around the world with Hotel InterContinental Jordan

NOTHING CAN stimulate an appetite, like a trip around the world. Starting on 15 September, Hotel InterContinental Jordan gives guests the opportunity to eat their way around the world. Anyone who craves a taste of India at Bukhara, authentic Mexican food from Mama Juinita, fine Lebanese cuisine from Okaz, or French cuisine coupled with Arabian entertainment at El Pasha Night Club has the chance to win.

While dining at any of the outlets, guests will receive a credit card sized "passport" with five blank spaces. The spaces will be stamped, one stamp for every cover dining.

After collecting five stamps, the card can be entered into the draw to win an around the world trip for two, traveling Business Class on Emirates Airlines and United Airlines. The trip includes complimentary accommodations

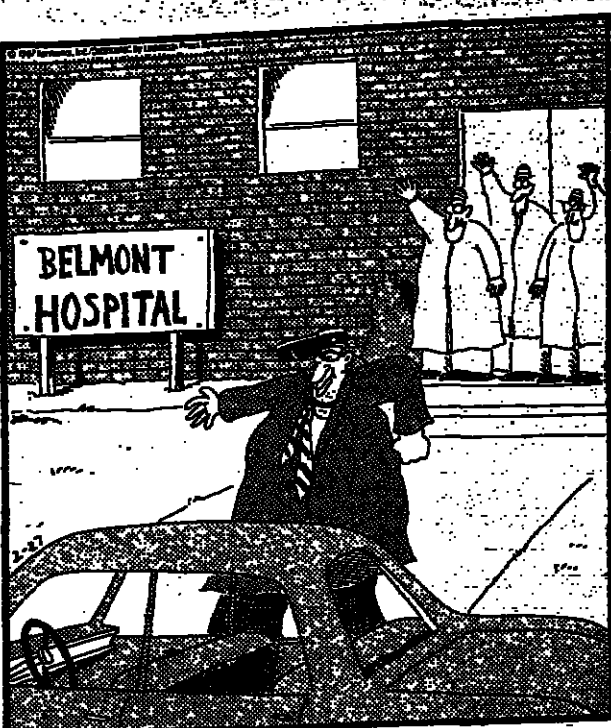
and breakfast in InterContinental Hotels in Dubai, Singapore, Bali, Hong Kong, San Francisco, New York, London, and back to Dubai.

Guests are allowed multi-entries, all one needs to do is collect the five stamps. To make things easier, stamps can be collected from any restaurant in InterContinental Hotels throughout the Middle East and Africa. Visa Advantage members receive one free entry to the draw irrespective of how many people dine as long as they pay with the Visa card (with the Visa Advantage sticker attached).

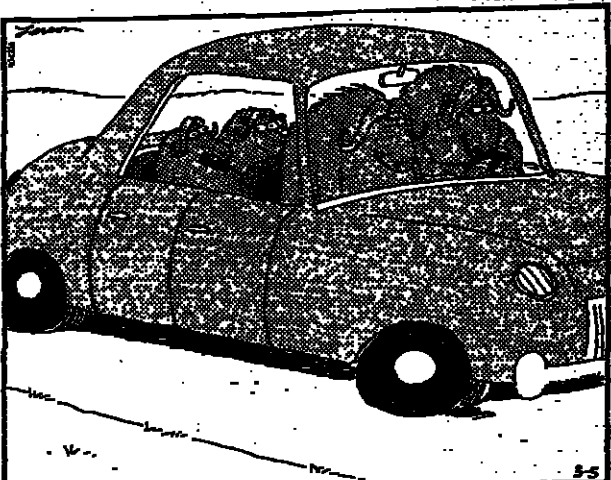
The promotion continues until 10 December, 1997. So for a chance to travel around the world, get your forks and knives ready. ■

## THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



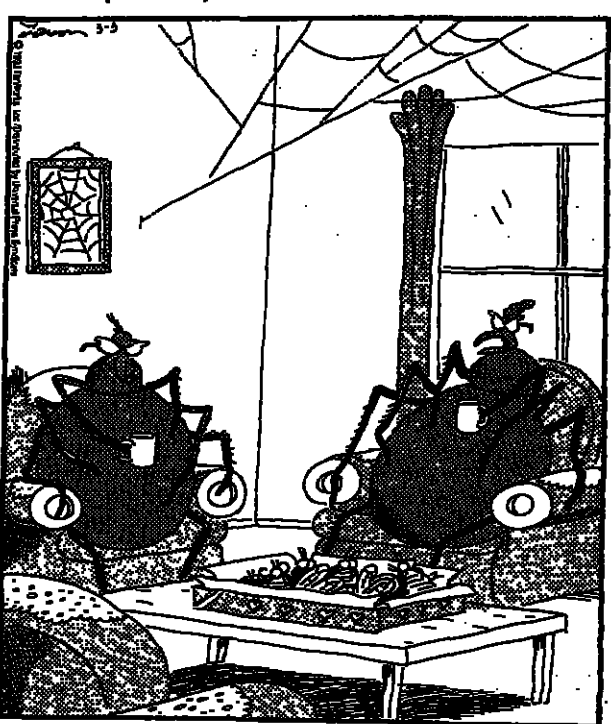
Gus Ferguson: Recipient of the first brain bypass operation.



"It wasn't me, Dad! It was Randy's musk gland!"



That evening, with her blinds pulled, Mary had three helpings of corn, two baked potatoes, extra bread and a little lamb.



"Oh, the box of dead files? Ramone gave them to me Saturday night during his courtship display. ... Of course, they were already sucked dry."

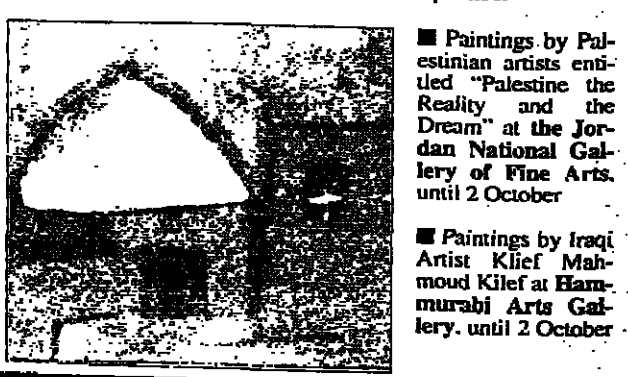
## AGENDA

## Exhibitions

■ Works by Darleen Wilkerson entitled "Arab Madinas in Batik" at the Jordan Crafts Development Centre (Al Aydi), Jabal Amman, Second

Circle, finish today 25 September

■ Paintings exhibition entitled "La Radioactive" at the French Cultural Centre, until 30 September



■ Paintings by Palestinian artists entitled "Palestine the Reality and the Dream" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, until 2 October

■ Paintings by Iraqi Artist Kheif Mahmoud Kheif at Hammurabi Arts Gallery, until 2 October

2:00—Holly & Ivy  
2:30—Muppet Show  
3:00—Rita Hayworth  
3:30—World of Color  
4:00—The Muppet Show  
4:30—Tali  
5:00—French Program  
5:30—New Horizons  
5:55—Nightingale  
6:00—Ties that Bind  
6:30—Prison  
6:40—Time Travel  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:30—Feature Film

2:00—Holly & Ivy  
2:30—The Muppet Show  
3:00—Energy Express  
3:30—Lucky Luke  
4:00—America's Funniest Home Videos  
4:30—News at Four  
5:00—News at Five  
5:30—Fresh Prince  
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# The Star's GUIDE

Programs on JTV from 27 Sept. 3 Oct.

## Amman cinemas

- Philadelphia I (Tel: 634149): *The Fifth Element*
- Philadelphia II (Tel: 634149): *The Birdcage*
- Plaza (Tel: 699238): *Bad Company*
- Concord I (Tel: 677420): *Mars Attacks*
- Concord II (Tel: 677420): *Batman & Robin*
- Galleria I (Tel: 634149): *Face Off*
- Galleria II (Tel: 634149): *My Best Friend's Wedding*

## Movies & Videos

### Cop Land

● Stars attended the premiere opening of "Cop Land" in New York recently. Among those attending were Annabella Sciorra, Cathy Moriarty and Sylvester Stallone.



Stallone and Flevin



Debbie Gibson



John Leguizamo and wife



Marla Maples



Keitel, Liotta, Sciorra and Stallone

### ENGLISH PROGRAMS

#### SATURDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
2:30—Muppet Show  
3:00—Blue Heelers  
3:30—World of Geo  
4:00—The Vally Between  
4:30—Tilt  
5:00—French Programs  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Neighbors  
8:00—Ties that Bind  
8:30—Prism  
9:10—Time Trax  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:30—Feature Film

#### SUNDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
2:30—The Magic School Bus  
3:00—Energy Express  
3:40—Lucky Lucky  
4:00—American Chart Show  
6:00—French Programs  
7:00—News in French  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Fresh Prince of Bel Air  
8:00—Cinema, Cinema, Cinema  
8:30—National Geographic  
9:10—Renegade  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:30—One West Waikiki  
11:15—Sisters

#### MONDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
2:10—The Show With The Mouse  
2:30—Cowboy Of The Mos Mesa  
3:00—Gillette Sports Special  
3:30—Deep Water Have  
4:00—Animal Show  
4:30—Ocean Girl  
5:15—French Programs  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Neighbors  
8:00—Murphy Brown



Murphy Brown, Monday at 8:00 pm

8:30—Babylon 5  
9:10—Highlander  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:30—Emergency Room(e.r.)  
11:15—Homicide

#### TUESDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
2:10—Sandocan  
2:30—C.R.O.  
3:00—Square One T.V.  
3:30—Skippy  
4:30—The Album Show  
5:15—French Programs  
7:00—News in French  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Coach  
8:00—Tilt  
8:30—Encounter  
9:10—Nature of Things  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:30—Great Defender

#### WEDNESDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
2:10—Jonny Quest  
2:30—Super Daze  
3:00—Secrets of Treasure Island  
3:30—Spell Binder  
4:00—Monsters Today  
4:30—Border Town  
6:00—French Programs  
7:00—News in French  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Neighbors  
8:00—Soldier's Diary  
8:30—Oprah Winfrey Show  
9:10—Spencer for Hire  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:25—Land's End  
11:00—American Gothic

#### THURSDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
2:10—Ovide and The Gang  
2:30—The New Fred and Barney  
3:00—America's Funniest People  
3:30—He Shoot He Scores  
4:30—Shingalana  
5:00—French Programs  
7:00—News in French  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Trivial Pursuit  
8:00—Parenthood  
8:30—lots and clark (Superman)  
9:10—Kung Fu  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:30—Feature Film  
12:00—Step By Step

7:15—Magazine  
L'au de Colomb

#### DIMANCHE

5:00—Secrets de famille  
5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres  
6:00—Magazine  
Faut pas rêver  
7:00—Le journal  
7:15—Magazine pour tous  
Ziva

#### LUNDI

5:00—Secrets de famille  
5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres  
6:00—Thalassa  
7:00—Le journal  
7:15—Magazine scientifique  
Cinq sur cinq

#### FRIDAY

2:00—Holy Koran  
2:05—Fistones  
2:30—Leo The Lion  
3:00—French Programs  
4:00—Family Matters  
4:30—NBA  
6:10—French Film  
7:00—News in French  
7:30—News Headlines  
7:35—Neighbors  
8:00—The Health Show  
8:30—Adventures of Brisco County  
9:10—Drama Series  
10:00—News at Ten  
10:30—Best Seller  
11:15—Daddy's Girls

#### PROGRAMMES EN FRANÇAIS

#### SAMEDI

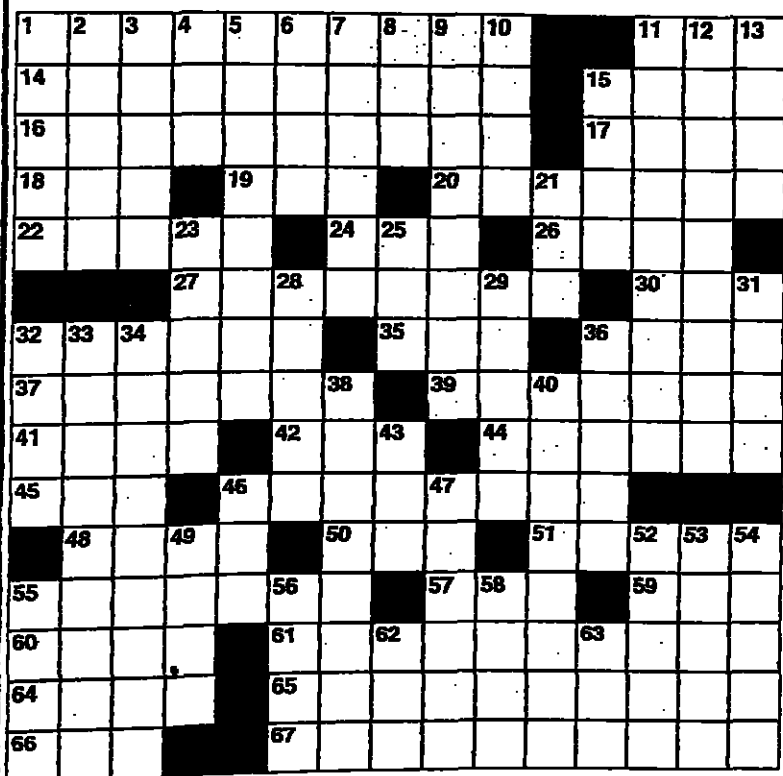
5:00—Secrets de famille  
5:30—Des chiffres et des lettres  
6:00—La chanson de l'hirondelle  
7:00—Le journal

#### VENREDI

5:30—Série: Mozart -1/5  
7:00—Le journal  
7:15—Magazine  
Allo la terre

Programs are subject to change by JTV

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE



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### ACROSS

1 Bergman-Bogart film  
11 Dominion (Virginia)  
14 Receptive audience  
15 At any time  
16 Bases  
17 Letter on a key  
18 Wade  
19 Roast chicken  
20 Under poorest circumstances  
22 Mountain chain  
24 Have sustenance  
26 Comprehensive  
27 Something left out  
30 Tennis stroke  
32 Disheveled

### DOWN

35 A Gabor  
36 Entranceway  
37 Like some jackets  
39 Adopt  
41 Bearing  
42 Get a bead on  
44 Made a sweep  
45 Sault—Marie  
46 Estimates  
48 Mimic  
50 Toy pistol  
51 Princeton player  
55 Sooner—  
57 "Honest"  
59 Chou En  
60 Tall tale teller  
61 Game canines  
64 Hoodie  
65 Not excessive  
66 Actress Sue—  
Langdon  
67 Not accented

### ACROSS

32 Certain flowers, briefly  
33 Certain  
34 Enjoy a Sunday morning rest  
36 "—say, nct."  
38 Prudent  
40 Some children  
43 — culpa  
46 Cunning  
47 Thinly scattered  
49 Jug handles  
52 Parish church land, in England  
53 Noblemen  
54 Comes up  
55 Russian saint  
56 Makes mistakes  
58 Brief life lines?  
62 Flooding material  
63 Worris: abbr.

## THIS WEEK'S HOROSCOPE

By Linda Black

Weekly Tip: Take things slowly and carefully. Take care of business. Be especially nice to all authority figures.

**Aries (March 21-April 19).** Finish up an old project or a report you've been writing. Stay home and fix something. Get to work on everything you've postponed. That's all your work as well as your housework.

**Taurus (April 20-Sept. 20).** Get the money you need. It wants to come into your account. Study business, or anything having to do with valuables. These are good days for home improvement projects. If you want to do it faster, invite your friends over to help.

**Gemini (Sept. 21-June 21).** Finish old projects while the moon's still in your sign. You're getting luckier, but don't start anything quite yet. Gather the money you need and budget it. Take your coupons when you go shopping.

**Cancer (June 22-July 22).** You're pressed. Don't put an old assignment off any longer. There's lots to get done. You'll be racing at full speed, so pay attention. Stick with the basics.

**Leo (July 23-Aug. 22).** Get together with old friends to celebrate the autumnal equinox. Finish up business you've been neglecting. The moon's in your sign, and all's well with the world. Your confidence is excellent and you'll be great at public speaking.

**Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).** An older person has an unreasonable demand. If it's a mistake, point that out before the problem gets any worse. Hustle to finish an overdue assignment. Don't argue any more, simply do what you were told.

**Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23).** Your supervisor wants things done exactly by the book. Arguing is pointless. Your team is red hot. With your brains and their enthusiasm, you're all bound to win.

**Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).** Take care of money by paying off a bill. Travel looks good. You may even fall in love with a beautiful stranger.

**Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).** Settle a dispute by agreeing to the other person's demands. He or she may surprise you by doing the same. Money's the issue.

**Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).** Finish up an old job. Get your differences with a partner hammered out. This argument has gone on too long. It's about money.

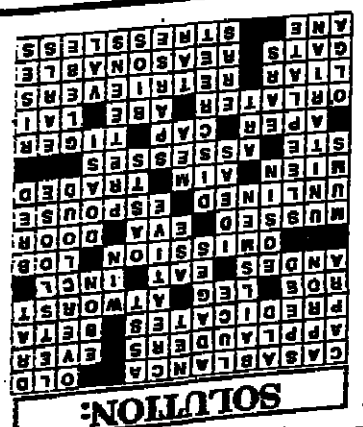
**Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).** Romance blossoms with an old friend. Work hard so you can have time off. Your partner wants to race off and do something exciting.

**Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20).** Stay home and listen to a friend's complaints. Love blossoms. Be near a sensitive, gentle, caring person.

**If You're Having a Birthday This Week:** As you finish old business you become more successful. Learn self-discipline and win big. Go along with an older person's ideas and earn more money.

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# Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

## Nouvelles du Pays

Tabac

### La Jordanie s'ouvre aux blondes étrangères

Le gouvernement a récemment autorisé l'importation des cigarettes étrangères par le secteur privé et dans le même temps adopté la libération des prix. In fine, il cherche également à améliorer la qualité de la production locale de cigarettes.



La contrebande de cigarettes étrangères représentait jusqu'ici un marché de 30 millions de dinars.

Un comité spécial, tout un adroite de membres ministériels pour changer les règles du marché du tabac en Jordanie. «Ce comité visait à définir les conditions d'importation de cigarettes par le secteur privé et les nouvelles normes auxquelles devaient répondre les sociétés jordanaises de tabac, notamment la réduction en nicotine et en goudrons», rappelle Mohammed Samadi, secrétaire-général au Ministère.

En ouvrant les frontières, le gouvernement compte également éliminer la contrebande qui représente un volume de 30 millions de dinars par an, ce qui nuit tant aux sociétés jordanaises qu'au Trésor public. Jusqu'à présent, les cigarettes étrangères étaient importées par le ministère de l'approvisionnement, à des prix beaucoup plus élevés que ceux des cigarettes vendues sous le manteau.

**Vive la concurrence**  
La nouvelle politique libérale n'est cependant pas du côté des tabaculteurs, qui ont récemment protesté contre la décision du ministre de l'agriculture d'interdire carrément la culture de tabac en Jordanie. Elle a finalement été remise à la prochaine législature. Mais les agriculteurs craignent encore qu'on leur coupe les vivres.

Dans les années 30, la culture du tabac faisait vivre plus de 50.000 personnes et couvrait une surface de 96.000 dunums (1 dunum = 1000 mètres carrés). La récolte était alors entièrement vendue à l'unique société jordanienne en activité.

Aujourd'hui, les choses ont changé. Trois entreprises publiques se partagent la production de cigarettes. Depuis quelques années, elles ont obtenu le droit d'importer du tabac américain, délaissant peu à peu la production locale. La superficie cultivée du tabac s'est ainsi réduite à 29.000 dunums. Maintenant que le secteur privé du royaume peut importer des cigarettes étrangères et les distribuer sur le marché local, les sociétés publiques de production de cigarettes sont prêtes à abandonner totalement la production locale pour être plus compétitives. Dernièrement, elles ont ainsi prétendu ne pas posséder les machines nécessaires pour traiter le tabac local et demandé aux tabaculteurs de stopper leur production dès 1998.

Face à la concurrence des cigarettes étrangères, les entreprises jordanaises sont ainsi amenées à améliorer la qualité de leur production, mais au détriment des tabaculteurs.

Rana Kuwar-Bagdeen

### En France, on ne fume pas tranquille

Depuis les lois Evin, au début des années 90, les fumeurs ne peuvent plus fumer en toute quiétude. Dans les cafés, les restaurants, les couloirs et les quais du métro, les gares et les trains, les lieux de travail et de loisirs, ils sont désormais tenus d'écraser leur clope avant d'entrer. En réalité, les fumeurs et les restaurants ainsi que les entreprises doivent installer des espaces fumeurs et non-fumeurs. En revanche, dans les lieux publics tels que les halls de gares, les fumeurs n'ont pas le droit d'allumer leur cigarette sous peine d'être mis à l'amende. Toutefois, dans ce domaine, la répression policière est pratiquement inexistante.

Si le fumeur persiste dans son vice, les slogans publicitaires sont là pour le culpabiliser et le dissuader, jusque sur le paquet de cigarettes. Les fabricants sont en effet tenus par la loi d'inscrire sur les emballages des mentions préventives du type «Nuit gravement à la santé» ou encore «Fumer nuit à votre entourage». Pour ne pas avoir respecté la typographie de ces sentences, Philip Morris risque de payer plus de 130 millions de francs d'indemnités au Comité national contre le tabagisme.

Le Jourdain

Conflit

## Fonctionnaire n'est pas carpette

Sohair El-Tall est fonctionnaire au ministère de la culture. Depuis 1992, le ministre n'a jamais eu à se plaindre de son travail jusqu'à ce qu'elle donne son avis.

Depuis mai dernier, les mesures de rétorsion s'abattent sur Sohair El-Tall, directrice du département des conférences et des expositions auprès du ministère de la culture. Dernier rebondissement de ce mauvais feuillet : le ministre Qassem Abou Ein a décidé la semaine dernière de former une commission d'enquête sur le cas de son employée, sans préciser les infractions qu'elle a commises dans son travail. Peu de temps avant, le Premier ministre lui-même, à la demande de Qassem Abou Ein, a interdit à la jeune femme d'exercer ses talents d'écrivaine.

Ce conflit entre un ministre et l'un de ses fonctionnaires remonte à avril dernier. Le ministre de la culture avait alors demandé à Sohair El-Tall de préparer la participation jordanienne à l'exposition Vision de Jérusalem qui aurait dû être inaugurée le 16 septembre dernier à Paris. La Jordanie, l'Autorité Palestinienne, l'Égypte et Israël étaient invitées à cette exposition par la mairie de Paris.

Sohair El-Tall a répondu à son supérieur que l'intérêt de la Jordanie n'était pas de participer à cette exposition, car selon elle, Israël risquait de s'en servir pour confirmer ses prétentions géopolitiques sur la Ville Sainte. Le ministre a refusé cet argument qui selon lui n'était qu'une conviction personnelle et sentimentale.

La directrice a alors rétorqué que sa position découle de la politique jordanienne officielle et s'inspire de la lutte des Hachémites, au premier desquels le roi Hussein, pour défendre Al-Quds (Jérusalem), un des trois grands lieux saints musulmans. Sohair a par ailleurs fait remarquer que, selon le règlement administratif, «le

fonctionnaire doit attirer l'attention de ses responsables sur tout ce qui pourrait porter atteinte à l'unité du pays». Ce qu'elle a fait ! A son avis, «si on aide les Israéliens à avoir sur Jérusalem-Est, une tutelle politique sous prétexte qu'ils y ont des sites religieux, alors demain ils revendiqueront la tutelle politique sur Madaba».

Malgré tout, la directrice a continué à assister aux réunions préparatoires pour l'exposition de Paris. Mais cela ne lui a pas épargné les tracasseries.

Le 15 mai, elle loupe une réunion parce qu'elle est malade (certificats médicaux à l'appui). Elle est tout de même sanctionnée et son salaire, amputé d'une semaine.

**Exposition annulée**  
Le 17 mai, elle écope d'un avertissement car elle est arrivée au bureau avec six minutes de retard.

Fonctionnaire depuis 1992, Sohair El-Tall a toujours eu sur son travail des rapports annuels avec mention Très bien. Elle est connue pour son dévouement et son dynamisme. Le Forum de la créativité féminine, que son département a organisé, a été un grand succès reconnu par le ministre Abou Ein lui-même. Craignant d'être licenciée, la jeune femme a porté plainte contre le ministre de la culture auprès de la Cour Suprême de Justice. La première séance a eu lieu la semaine dernière. Sohair et son avocat n'ont voulu faire aucun commentaire mais se disent confiants dans la justice jordanienne.

Les bonnes nouvelles sont en fait arrivées du Caire et de Paris. L'Égypte vient en effet de recevoir les résultats de l'étude entreprise par une historienne de l'UNESCO. Dans ce rapport, il est dit qu'il n'y avait pas à



Sohair El-Tall

exploiter l'exposition parisienne, pourtant conçue pour démontrer les points communs des trois religions monothéistes, à des fins politiques. Dans une lettre à l'ambassadeur jordanien à Paris, le gouvernement égyptien annonce qu'il ne participera pas à l'exposition à la lumière des résultats de l'étude. Quelques jours avant son ouverture, Paris a finalement décidé d'annuler l'exposition. Entre-temps, les mesures autoritaires contre Sohair El-Tall se poursuivent : le secrétaire général du ministère a omis son nom dans la délégation jordanienne au Festival du théâtre

arabe au Maroc. Surtout, on lui a interdit d'écrire, invoquant le droit de réserve des fonctionnaires. Pourtant, dès son entrée au ministère, elle avait eu l'autorisation de recevoir autre chose que des papiers administratifs. «Quand j'ai commencé à écrire de la littérature en 1973, je n'ai demandé l'autorisation à personne», semble défendre Sohair El-Tall, avant de rappeler que le rôle d'un ministre de la culture est d'encourager la littérature et non pas empêcher les écrivains d'utiliser leur plume.

Suleiman Sweiss

Presse

## Le grand ménage du gouvernement

Il vient de décider d'interrompre la publication de huit hebdomadaires. Mais l'Association de presse jordanienne prétend qu'ils sont davantage à subir la loi des ciseaux. Quatre mois après sa mise en œuvre, le nouveau code de la presse fait encore parler de lui.

Le Star et donc Le Jourdain ont évité le couperet. Ils sont d'ores et déjà sortis d'affaire, tout comme Al-Silhan, Al-Dwa, Al-Sabeel et Akhbar Al-Ishraq. En revanche, les autres hebdomadaires peuvent se faire du souci.

Hier, le ministère a commencé d'envoyer une lettre aux 41 publications dont les comptes financiers ne seraient pas en conformité avec la loi de 1993, amendée en mai dernier. Dans cette lettre, le ministère devrait leur demander de cesser de paraître.

Déjà cinq hebdomadaires ont reçu un tel désagréable courrier : Al-Balad, Al-Hadith, Al-Majid, Al-Mithaq et Sawt al-Mar'a. Dès qu'ils auront répondu à tous les critères financiers exigés par le gouvernement, ils pourront à nouveau s'afficher en kiosque.

Hier, le ministère de l'information et le département général de la presse et des publications ont d'abord refusé de communiquer le nombre exact de revues et périodiques concernés par cette suspension, décision sans précédent depuis le début de la démocratisation en Jordanie. En 1989, En fin de journée, ils ont finalement lâché un chiffre : huit hebdomadaires suspendus. Selon l'Association de la Presse jordanienne, il y en aurait davantage, peut-être 18.

Ces diverses interdictions de paraître sont le résultat de l'adoption en mai dernier d'un nouveau code de la presse. Le gouvernement mettrait ainsi en œuvre un certain nombre d'amendements à la loi sur la presse et les publications de 1993, afin, soi-disant, de préserver les mœurs publiques. Le journaux ne peuvent donc plus en théorie publier d'informations, analyses, commentaires ou caricatures portant atteinte à l'unité nationale, la sécurité du pays, la famille royale, la religion, les diri-

geants du pays, les monnaies. Bref, il n'y a plus grand chose à dire. Toutes ces interdictions sont accompagnées de fortes amendes en cas de violation.

Mais c'est par le biais du compte en banque que le ministère de l'information est sur le point aujourd'hui de fermer la plupart des hebdomadaires. C'est cette presse turbulente et pas toujours respectueuse qui, de toute façon, était directement visée par la loi. Pour les hebdomadaires, les nouvelles conditions financières à remplir sont particulièrement draconiennes. La loi leur demande d'augmenter leur capital jusqu'à 300.000 dinars.

### Constitution respectée ?

Dès le mois de juin, l'hebdomadaire satirique *Abad Rabbo* était le premier à jeter l'éponge devant de telles exigences financières. Tous les autres ont réussi à augmenter leur

capital. A la mi-août, le ministère de l'industrie et du commerce reconnaissait même que les journaux étaient en règle avec le nouveau code.

Quinze jours plus tard, le ministère de l'information contre-attaque et leur demande cette fois de présenter leurs livres de comptes, et ce pour la première fois depuis 1993 et la promulgation de la loi. Pendant plus de trois semaines, le département de la presse et des publications a donc vérifié, preuves à l'appui, si le capital exigé avait bien été versé. A défaut, le gouvernement a décidé de donner un grand coup de balai.

Par ailleurs, il vient de décider de rejeter la plainte que certains hebdomadaires avaient déposée en juillet dernier pour protester contre les nouveaux amendements de la loi. Au nom du gouvernement, le procureur général a établi que «la

loi ne violait aucun article de la constitution jordanienne», et qu'elle ne portait pas atteinte aux droits et aux libertés des citoyens et/ou à la liberté de la presse et des publications.

La situation de la presse en Jordanie ne laisse pourtant pas d'inquiéter plusieurs associations de défense des droits de l'homme, notamment *Reporters sans frontières*. Son représentant au Moyen-Orient, Djailal Malti ne cache pas son inquiétude : «Cette loi va permettre au gouvernement de passer le cap des élections sans aucun problème, sans aucun nuage puisqu'il n'y aura plus personne pour critiquer, pour s'opposer, pour participer simplement au débat de la campagne électorale». Sans nous rassurer, il rappelle enfin que «la presse est le baromètre de la démocratie».

Yannick Laine



Au moins huit hebdomadaires, mais sans doute davantage, ne seront plus dans les kiosques dans les jours qui viennent.

Polémique

## Gentillesse au Ministre

Le ministre de la culture estime que l'association des écrivains se mêle de politique, donc de ce qui ne la regarde pas. Ce n'est pas l'avis de son président «rentre-dedans» Fakhri Kawar, qui le fait savoir.

### Le ministre de la culture

Qassem Abou Ein, peut se vanter d'être aujourd'hui le ministre le plus contesté par les intellectuels jordanais. Dans une guerre de lettres ouvertes, le président de l'Association des Ecrivains Jordaniens (AEJ), Fakhri Kawar, accuse Abou Ein de «souffrir d'inactivité» et d'écrire des lettres sans fondement. Il rappelle enfin au ministre que son appartenance au Parti National Constitutionnel (PNC) ne l'autorise pas à donner des conseils aux autres sur la neutralité.

En fait, tout commence début septembre lorsque l'AEJ, et d'autres associations culturelles, reçoivent une circulaire, signée par le ministre de la culture. Dans celle-ci, Qassem Abou Ein leur demande de se limiter à des activités purement culturelles, sans «fins politiques», tribales ou communautaires, comme le stipule la loi de 1966 sur les associations culturelles.

Le président de l'AEJ estime qu'il n'a commis aucune infraction et considère la circulaire comme une provocation. La suite de la correspondance met en évidence deux conceptions de la culture : celle du ministre qui est très restrictive et conservatrice, et

celle de l'association qui considère la culture comme une activité humaine globale, dont la politique fait partie. Toutefois pour le président de l'AEJ il ne s'agit pas de se mettre au service d'un courant politique ou d'un parti.

En février dernier, le ministre Abou Ein avait déjà mis en garde les associations culturelles. En mars, il avait arbitrairement dissous le comité directeur du Forum culturel de Kérak. Depuis quelques temps enfin, il est en conflit avec l'un des directeurs de son ministère (voir ci-contre).

«Ces mises en garde injustifiées reflètent les intentions inamicales du ministère à l'égard des associations culturelles : elles annoncent le retour aux lois mariales sous couvert de la démocratie», n'hésite pas à déclarer Fakhri Kawar qui ne cache pas son inquiétude : «L'association est en danger».

Que demande alors l'association au ministre Abou Ein ? Le puissant président de l'AEJ répond : «Le ministre doit retirer sa circulaire et classer le dossier ; s'il y a eu violation de la loi c'est à la justice de prendre une décision».

Su.S.



## C'est la vie

L'agenda français d'Amman

### Vidéo

Hommage au Commandant Cousteau. *Le Monde du Silence*, de Louis Malle (1956). Poissons multicolores, épaves oubliées, pêcheurs d'éponges... Le Commandant Cousteau nous convie à la découverte du monde sous-marin. Lundi 29 septembre à 20h30 au Centre culturel français. Tél. : 637009/636445/612658.

### Exposition

Vingt panneaux et une projection vidéo sur la découverte, pour tout savoir sur le phénomène découvert par Pierre et Marie Curie. Au CCF, jusqu'au 30 septembre.

فكرنا من اننا صول



## The quality of the leather is not strained

By Lucia van der Post

EVERY HANDBAG tells a story. Even if you choose some nice anonymous brand that you think is entirely neutral, somebody somewhere will be judging you. Snooty shoppers, fashion cognoscenti, female friends, passing acquaintances and even some otherwise perfectly grown-up men have been known to make whole sets of assumptions based purely on the handbag swinging on the arm or from the shoulder. Prada, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Hermes, Mulberry, Coach the big brand names all have attached to them a symbolism that seems almost too much for simple gilt and leather to support.

But of the most potent names, the oddest thing is how all but one, Mulberry, are foreign. Granted, a few niche British names Lulu Guinness, Anya Hindmarch, Samantha Heskia have found constituencies of their own, but they tend to be small and quirky. They do not head the shopping lists of every tourist in town.

British companies, having long been envious of the troupes of tourists in the Via Napoleone clutching their Prada or Gucci bags and in the Avenue Montaigne with Louis Vuitton or Hermes bags, have been eyeing this lucrative market. They are now bidding for a slice of it.

The little-known luggage company of Tanner Krolle is one of the first to make a determined effort. On 7th October, the company opens its first shop with a new range of leather-goods, and which, for the first time, includes a big collection of handbags.

Tanner Krolle has been one of Britain's best-kept secrets so secret that too few knew of it and the few elegant businessmen who flaunted their impeccable brief-cases and suitcases were safe in the knowledge that nobody else would have one like it.

The company is almost as old as Louis Vuitton and started in much the same way; at almost the same time as Frederick Krolle, newly arrived from Germany, was starting his saddlery business in Islington, the first Louis Vuitton was starting his in Asnières outside Paris. When Krolle, just like Vuitton, began to notice that horse-carriages were being replaced by new-fangled trains and motor cars, he moved into luggage. The distinctive trunks and hunting-kit bags started to appear.

Though the company maintained its impeccable quality throughout the years, the designs failed to adapt to the change in modern travelling habits and the company was sold to Chanel. Philip Davis, a new young managing director, was brought in and he quickly saw that something drastic had to be done.

The luxury leather goods business is worth some \$3.6 billion worldwide and 60 percent of the business is handbags Tanner Krolle had none and 20 percent is in small leathergoods, and again Tanner Krolle had none. The remaining 20 percent is in luggage but though Tanner Krolle's trunks and attache cases were of wonderful quality, they were too heavy for the modern market.

We had a fast diminishing niche business and that had to be changed. Also, the company had no identity that the public, as a whole, could relate to. It didn't have its own direction it was basically following trends, not making its. He saw that a professional designer was needed and called in Kathy Formby, who had worked with Calvin Klein for several years on his accessories, as well as for the American brand of Mark Cross. She immediately loved "the bridle leather, the sense of history...I found something very romantic about it. But they needed products that were softer, lighter."

And so Tanner Krolle will open at 38 Old Bond Street with a revamped line of much lighter luggage (though the traditional hunting-kit bag an irresistible piece for those who love old luggage designs and a couple of the trunks, with the stiff linings removed, will be retained in a slightly streamlined form). There will also be some eminently desirable handbags, as well as what is known in the trade as "business items" (briefcases, computer-cases, wallets, mobile phone cases and the like).

Formby has unified the range, using beautifully milled steel and brass for the locks and handles ("I felt we needed to lose the very clunky brass fittings"), as well as developing motifs (such as a circular lock, very discreet initials, stitches and tabs) that will become the Tanner Krolle trademark.

She has also introduced lines with a bit of wit about them: backpacks, easy-carry hold-alls and strong canvas suitcases, which are durable but light to carry. The handbags are mostly made of Italian calf leather but English bridle leather is still used for suitcases and trunks.

Some of the handbags have removable covers, so an alligator-bag can present a smooth calf face to the world. The men's cases can hold umbrellas (in a waterproof pouch), mobile phones, computers, as well as sporting pockets for computer discs, business cards, pens.

This is a top-of-the-market range so nothing comes cheap: prices range from about £100 for a wallet and go up to £1,000 for the top-of-the-range leather trunks, but a good strong, nylon, leather-bound suitcase could be had for £800. Handbags range from £300 to £600. Anybody wanting to present the man in their life with an extraordinarily versatile travelling bag, a briefcase that holds almost everything he could possibly need or just an impeccably crafted wallet should take a good look at the range.

As for women there is the best beauty-case I've yet come across (in matt black with a zippered compartment for mirror, brushes, lipsticks) and another compartment for bottles and more substantial things, as well as some elegant and eminently desirable bags of all sorts.

None of these is the stuff of impulse buying the mood may sometimes be light-hearted but the prices are very much not. These are surely heirloom, investment pieces but then just think of what age does to the patina of leather.

Financial Times Syndication

## Moments unequalled in the valley of the kings

By Antony Thorncroft

THE TEMPLE of Isis at Philae is everything an Egyptian temple should be. There is the lofty pylon, or exterior wall, alive with carved scenes of the pharaoh Neos Dionysus smiting his enemies; there are colonnades and subsidiary temples; there are courtyards and vestibules that lead remorselessly to the holy of holies, the inner sanctuary, where, surrounded by the inevitable wall etchings of pharaohs in obedience to the gods, there is the altar on which the priests sacrificed to the mother goddess Isis, the great rival to the Virgin Mary in the first centuries after Christ.

Ignoring the fact that the temple is actually a trompe d'oeil it was moved 100 yards from its original island on the Nile to the adjacent Agilkia in the 1970s to prevent flooding it sums up the timeless endurance of Upper Egypt. Its perennial appeal to travellers since its initial construction around 200 BC is obvious in the graffiti that covers the walls.

Here is Roman abuse: "B. Mure stultus est" (Mure is stupid). 6th century AD Greek inscriptions annexing the temple for Christianity, confirmed by an altar in one aisle, the Coptic cross, and the superficial erasing of the faces of the ancient gods; Napoleonic military bragging and a list of the British dead after the Sudan campaign, plus the incised names of hardy 19th century travellers who journeyed to this edge of Nubia.

Today, the temple is given over to new invaders: package tourists from the cruise liners, and to nightly son et lumieres. But at the moment there is a balance: Philae, and the other temples and tombs of Upper Egypt, manage to retain much of their perennial mystery while providing an exotic holiday destination and a cheap one.

The Gulf war, followed by an outbreak of Islamic militancy, have temporarily clipped Egypt's aspirations to be a major tourist destination. But much of the infrastructure is in place, including more than 200 boats offering Nile cruises. To keep them moving, prices have tumbled and a week's progress through the key monumental sector, the 200km between Aswan and Luxor, can cost little more than £500 on a floating four-star hotel.

There are two obvious, over-riding, attractions in a Nile cruise, and they enjoy a wonderful symmetry. You get both the lazy beach holiday, the pleasure of basking in the perennial sun on the upper deck, watching the Nile snake through its thin strip of brilliant green fertile land, with the ever-encroaching desert visible on the horizon, plus the stimulation of an adventure holiday in the daily excursions to some of the most



Sightseers at Abu Simbel

intriguing historical sites in the world.

The trips ashore, usually taken early in the morning to avoid the heat, are unmissable. The Valley of the Kings near Luxor, where the pharaohs chose to be hidden in death, away from grave robbers a pious, illusory hope for all but Tutankhamen, whose resting place remained virtually inviolate until 1922 may not equal the Taj Mahal in man-made beauty, or the Grand Canyon in natural splendour, but in forcing reflections on the brevity of life, and of civilisations, in a dramatic setting, it is unequalled.

Intimate carvings, forest of wonderfully balanced columns, obelisks and sheer grandeur, mostly completed over 3,000 years ago; the temple at Luxor, joined to Karnak by an avenue of sphinxes and containing imposing statues of Ramses II; other temples at Edfu, which is an almost complete memorial to the falcon-headed god Horus, and the Nile side complex at Kom Ombo, where both Haroeris and Sobek were worshipped in adjacent shrines, and the most ardent crypto-Egyptologists will have earned the after-lunch relaxation of a camel ride and intrusion into a Nubian village.

The excursions hardly vary, but the ships do. It is just about worth paying up to £100 more for an upper deck cabin, and a smaller vessel, with fewer passengers, probably makes the journey more of an adventure: on a bigger ship the cruise element, with the much anticipated fancy dress parties and Nubian cabaret, holds sway.

Much depends on your guide, but those employed by the main travel companies will be far superior to anyone you might meet on the corniche at Aswan or Luxor. But the guides work to a formula: they ease you into such key sites as the Valley of the Kings but then control your time and freedom there, usually rationing you to just three tombs.

Some of the most important tombs seem always to be closed for repair, but make sure you penetrate the recently reopened tunnel which ends in the burial chamber of Ramses VI, with its wealth of wall paintings. (The tomb of Tutankhamun, which costs an excessive £8 entry fee, is small and bare but is unique in still containing his mummy.)

Perhaps the most chilling tomb is in the nearby Valley of the Queens. Amun-Hir-Khopshef was a son of Ramses III who died young, and the murals show him being led by his father into the underworld, being introduced to the gods, and finally walking, on his own, into eternity. It makes a good alternative to the tomb of Queen Nefertari, where 150 visitors a day pay £40 for just 10 minutes in this recently restored, brilliantly illuminated chamber.

The other great site of Upper Egypt, the temple at Abu Simbel with its monumental statues built by Ramses II to stare down invasions from the south, is at the far end of Lake Nasser, below Aswan. A few cruise ships now leave the town and head south, viewing the temples that were removed to higher ground when Lake Nasser, the largest man-made lake in the world, was created by the construction of the new Aswan Dam. Apart from Abu Simbel, the sites are not so impressive as the antiquities between Aswan and Luxor, and a road trip to Abu Simbel is offered by most of the packaged tours playing the main thoroughfare.

It costs around £75, and you must get up at 3.30 in the morning to join a convoy which, under armed escort, leaves Aswan at 4am. Since you are back in time for lunch, this means that more time is spent crossing the desert than exploring the giant carvings. If you are really keen, but slightly stingy, you can negotiate with the concierge of the Old Cataract Hotel in Aswan (where Agatha Christie wrote Death on the Nile), who will arrange a private taxi for nearer £30.

The attractions of a Nile cruise a leisurely progression in comfort with organised visits to some of the world's most impressive monuments at a very low price make it all but irresistible. On the downside, there is the likelihood of at least one day spent confined to cabin with an upset stomach, the inevitable close contact with fellow passengers, at least at meal times; and persistent pestering when ashore from local salesmen. This is not a holiday for solitaires. Even the shopkeepers who boast "no harassing" (adding 10 per cent more) cannot resist sidling up to would-be customers with advice.

Financial Times Syndication

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## THE STAR'S WORKSTATION COMPUTING & HIGH TECH NO

Edited by Zeid Nasser

### Internet & networking solutions play a role in changing the way we spend our money 'Smart Money' talks

By Jabra Ghneim

Special to The Star  
IN MANY ways the Internet is promising to ultimately fulfill the dreams of economic and social libertarians who care a great deal about the economic implications of the 'net'.

Nobody disagrees that the real potential of the Internet lies in its commercial promise: The ability to connect to virtual stores worldwide and exchange goods and services, or even intangibles such as information. All you need currently is a credit card account and a connection to the Internet. You can get instant stock quotes through many providers deal in the world financial markets from anywhere in the world.

So far the size of Internet commerce has been humble compared to its potential. IDC estimates that the current size of Internet commerce is \$300 million and see this figure rising to \$25 billion by the year 2000.

The main hindering factor for faster adaptation so far has been the lack of strong security measures on the 'net' in addition to the unavailability of the necessary technologies.

So far the US Senate has been against exporting strong encryption techniques overseas. Encryption is a way through which a program scrambles your digital IDs or signatures so that no hacker or cyber thief can discover it. In the US, which is the main producer of such software, the law treats such programs as 'munitions' that can't be exported without permission. Fortunately, some entrepreneurs working outside the US managed to write 'strong' encryption programs, such as 'Stronghold' which runs on a 'freeware' web server, Apache, which runs 45

percent of the web sites in the world.

However, it is the emergence of Smart Card Technology which will make a huge difference. Smart Cards are already in use in many European countries (the Moudex system), and



securely to a computer network to conduct on-line banking, view and send messages in addition to a host of other tasks. Sun, the owner of the Java standard, has released plans for many schemes, is working on such things as the Java Wallet, the Java Cash, and the Java Shopping Carts.

All are schemes for electronic payments through your computer, based on the Java language. The Smart Card is a perfect platform for Java due to its compactness. Last month an agreement was signed by which Siemens Semiconductors licensed the technology from Sun, to provide a new generation of smart card chips that will speed up the execution of the Java card instruction.

Microsoft also announced the availability of its own Smart Card SDK (Software Development Kit). Many vendors such as HP, Fischer International, and IBM have already expressed support for Microsoft's smart card platform. Add to the Smart Card scheme other plans such as Digital Cash and e-gold.

These schemes also depend on strong encryption techniques that help you spend and retrieve cash credits securely over networks. Banks estimate that their costs for conducting regular banking transactions will go down from 60 cents to 2 cents per transaction as a result of using smart money.

As a libertarian, all this is music to my ears. It essentially means lesser bureaucracy and the ability to easily transfer my capital from one place to another over the Internet, with no legal restrictions or unnecessary expenses. It simply means Utopia at hand.

You can also use it to log

### Computer & IT companies ::

Welcome to The Star's Workstation, the absolute source on what's hot and what's not in Jordan's IT market. Fax us on 648298 or email us at Star@NETS.com.Jo with your news and views.

### Acer emphasizes commitment to Jordanian business users: Acer roadshow comes to Amman

IN COOPERATION with Special Systems Co. (SSC), the Acer Middle East Roadshow 'stopped over' in Amman on Monday 22 September, 1997, as part of a region-wide tour aimed at business users.

This initiative means Acer is in line with its strategy to emphasize commitment to the corporate users, keeping them up-to-date on the latest technologies in workstations and servers. The event was also a show of support from Acer to its valued clients in the Jordanian market.

Acer started the event with a brief on its corporate directions and commitment to the Middle East market, with particular emphasis on its presence in Jordan.

This was followed by presentations by Intel, focusing on their newly launched products and their close association with Acer, to provide fresh technology to the corporate users.

The roadshow also featured an extensive overview of Acer servers and workstations in a variety of operating environments including large enterprise, medium and small office.

The presentation session was prepared by Special Systems Co. (SSC) which assured the audience of their full commitment and capability to providing integrated solutions and services to the corporate users in Jordan. The highlight of the

product showcase was Acer's latest Server, the Acer Altos 900K, and workstation, the AcerPower 6200, based on the latest Pentium II processor launched worldwide by Intel on 6 May, 1997. In addition, Acer's highly acclaimed Pentium Pro based servers (Acer Altos 1900 and Acer Altos 9000Pro) as well as Pentium

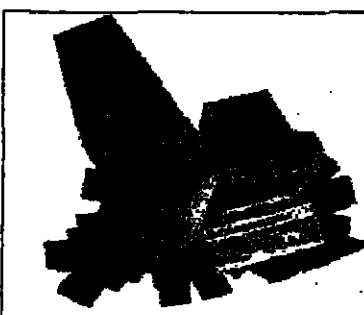
known by its direct presence in the UAE and a strong channel network across the region. Our 'Global-brand-local-Touch' approach has been immensely successful in Jordan where Acer has acquired a leading position in both corporate, as well as the home market segment.

He added that, "Acer products derive further strength by the value added by our long-standing channel partner, Special Systems in Jordan market in terms of providing high quality solutions and after-sales support."

Acer, founded in 1976, is currently the world's sixth largest PC company, as well as the leading PC player in the GCC, North African, and ASEAN markets. Acer operates through 80 offices in 38 countries and has over 17,000 employees supporting dealers in over 100 countries.

Drawing on its full range of core PC technologies, Acer set an industry standard in 1991 by designing the world's first single chip CPU upgrade technology, ChipUp, and is now a market leader for multimedia Pentium PCs.

Key Management strategies, "Fast food business model," "Global Brand Local Touch" and "Client-Server Organization" structure have dramatically benefited the Acer Group to become one of the top IT player worldwide.



Pro (AcerPower Pro) & Pentium (AcerPower 920 and AcerPower Ultra) based workstations were on display.

Also in the event were Acer's award winning notebooks including the AcerNote Nuovo with Pentium MMX technology and AcerNote Light multimedia, which provide most versatile mobile computing convenience to the traveling corporate executives.

Mr Tareq Ramahi, country sales manager, Acer said "Acer's commitment to the Middle East market is well

### News update

METS '97: It's an eye opener

● The Middle East Technology Show (METS) '97 is all set and ready to go, under the new slogan of 'It's an eye opener'.

According to the organizers, the Jordan Computer Society,

many participants have already booked their space at the show and it will probably be the largest computer event of its kind in Jordan.

So far, METS '97 sponsors

include: Access, T.E.N. Arabia On Line, ARAMEX, Primus, CD-Fans and BYTE Middle East.

METS '97 will be held from 13 to 16 November, 1997 at the Amman International Fair Hall. Don't miss it.

### NETS announces up to 12 Internet hours a day, for less than JD 30 a month

NETS, an Internet Service Provider and RDS, has recently introduced two new plans for Internet access for Jordanian users.

First, there's the 'Home Plan' which provides users with unlimited Internet access from 5 pm to 9 am the next day, every day of the month (16 hours), complete with full access to NETS On Line, all for JD 29 a month. Also for JD 29 a month, there's the 'Business Plan' which provides unlimited Internet access from midnight to 6 pm, and full access to NETS On Line.

These packages that offer twice unlimited access hours are the most attractive in Jordan. For more information, contact NETS on telephone 5510101.

### Flash: Intel's new chip

● Intel has announced its new 64-megabit chip which is considered to be a huge advancement in the field of consumer electronics in general.

The new 'Flash' chip is expected to provide very high performance levels in digital equipment including cameras, TVs and Internet enable TV.

Even hand-held computers will gain a power advantage, thanks to this new chip, which is said to be able to process twice as much data as a conventional microprocessor.

## Kenya's athletes run away with world records

By Pat Butcher

THEY MIGHT as well come from another planet, because their performances have been out of this world. Of the seven world records in 12 days last month, all but one were made by Kenyans, if we include Wilson Kipketer, who now runs for Denmark.

This was the culmination of a remarkable transformation, effected in little more than a decade, by just a handful of hard-working, resilient people. It followed two Olympic boycotts and the flight of the best to US colleges that had left the East African nation an athletic wasteland.

Henry Rono, who broke four world records in the 1970s, was perhaps the most spectacular victim of this situation. Kenya boycotted the Olympics the first time over the New Zealand rugby tour of the then apartheid state of South Africa in 1976. Then, in concert with the US, it boycotted the Moscow games in 1980 over Russia's invasion of Afghanistan. This meant that Rono never competed for the titles that his world records suggested were his for the taking.

Whatever contribution that made to Rono's personal tragedy is debatable, but he is a recovered alcoholic, eking out an existence as an underground carpark attendant in north America, by all accounts too ashamed to go home.

Miruts Yifter from neighboring Ethiopia won double gold in Moscow. Inspired by his victory and eager to expand the world cross country championships, the International Amateur Athletics Federation started paying travel grants.

The first time the Ethiopians entered, in Madrid 1981, they ran away with the team title. But if they had not made an error in counting the laps, they would have had the first six across the line, out of 300.

The Ethiopians dominated the championships for the next five years. But the occasional Kenyan medalist, and even individual winner (Some Muge in 1983) convinced the coach, Mike Kagei, that a concerted effort could realise the promise that Kip Keino's emergence as Kenya's first gold medal winner in the late 1960s had suggested.

Kosgei convinced the cash-strapped Kenyan athletics federation to finance a training camp at a higher altitude, even than Nairobi's 1750 metres (5900ft).

The advantages of living and training at a high altitude have been well documented. If athletes have had physical conditioning with less oxygen, when they race at sea-level, the effect is comparable to turbo-charging a motor.

Add to that the sort of training which the French sports daily L'Equipe recently described as demented, to which I can readily testify after several visits to Kenya, and you get a virtually unbeatable combination.

Following the national cross country championships in the mid-1980s, Kosgei took his charges up to the foothills of Mount Kenya, where trails were at levels as high as 2,300 metres, where they trained intensively for up to a month before the world championships. They won the world team race in 1986, have repeated the preparation process every year since, and have not been remotely challenged in the competition.

western highlands has ensured a regular supply of talented youngsters to maintain the momentum. Colm O'Connell, a member of the Order of St Patrick's, an Irish teaching brotherhood, knew nothing about coaching when he went to teach in St Patrick's High School in Iten, about 50 kilometres from Keino's home, in 1976. Press-ganged by a colleague into holding the stopwatch, he took correspondence courses in coaching, took over when the colleague left, and started producing junior champions in 1983.

The compound result of Kosgei and O'Connell's efforts were first felt on the track at the Seoul Olympics in 1988. Peter Rono, a former pupil at St Patrick's school, won the 1500 metres, and Kosgei's main man, three-time world cross country champion, John Ngugi, destroyed the field in the 5000 metres.

Another Kosgei protege, Julius Kariuki, won the steeplechase, and to the amazement of Brother Colm (as he is universally known), one of his rejects, Paul Ereng, won the 800 metres. "I told him two years before he wouldn't get in our school 4x400



metres team, and sent him away," he told me earlier this year.

It was one of his rare errors. Brother Colm has been instrumental in the development of many of the current stars, including Moses Kiptanui, who was only edged out of the new steeplechase world record in the last stride by colleague Bernard Barmasai. Daniel Komen, the new 5000 metres (and two miles) world record holder; and the stylish and enigmatic 800 metres record holder, Wilson Kipketer.

He has an impeccable pedigree: he was discovered by Keino who introduced him to the Irishman. Since leaving to study electrical engineering in Copenhagen in 1990, Kipketer has returned only sporadically to Kenya. But he has complemented his training at altitude with occasional visits to the Polish national altitude training camp with his current coach, Slawomir Nowak.

There are some strange alliances in athletics, but few stranger than Kipketer and Nowak. The runner already has a reputation among the media for glib utterances, reminiscent of Eric Cantona.

But his intercourse with Nowak runs alongside some of the more impenetrable passages in Samuel Beckett. Kent Andersson, a polyglot Swede, who helps manage Kipketer, says he has no idea how the pair

communicate. "Nowak doesn't speak English and hardly any Danish, and Wilson certainly doesn't speak Polish."

"I once drove from Warsaw to Spala, which is about two hours, with my son, who speaks good English. When we arrived, my son said, 'Dad, I didn't understand a word they said'. I told him, don't worry, I've been trying for two years, and I haven't figured it out either."

Whatever it is, it obviously works. And may it continue to work for the next three years, until the Sydney Olympics. In his absence from Atlanta, Veljko Rodal of Norway, a man he beat five times out of five last year, won the 800 metres gold.

Kipketer was barred from competing, since he was 12 months short of satisfying the residential requirement for Danish citizenship, a condition of entry for the International Olympic Committee. If he never wins that Olympic gold, it is unlikely that he will end up as an underground man like Henry Rono. And, since the world ranking lists are dominated by Kenyans from 800-10,000 metres, the likelihood is that one of his original compatriots will fill the gap. In the meantime, the only competitor he has is the clock. And Kipketer is beating it.

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